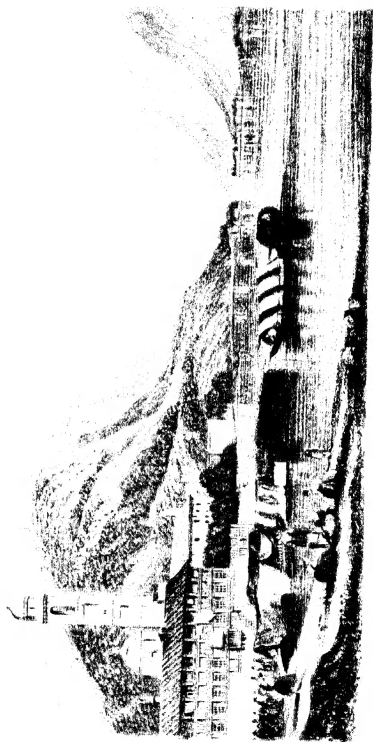


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THE

Christian Wreath

OF

PROSE, POETRY, AND ART.

A NEW EDITION.



LONDON :

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,

DEPOSITORIES, 56, PATERNOSTER ROW, 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD,

AND 164, PICCADILLY;

AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

—Jessie Anne Cumming—
 from her Affectionate Mother
 —Isabel Cumming—
Christmas day - 1875 -
 —Harriet—
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THE
CHRISTIAN WREATH.

LAKE OF COMO.

“ Sublime, but neither bleak, nor bare,
Nor misty, are the mountains there ;
Softly sublime, profusely fair,
Up to their summits clothed in green,
And fruitful as the vales between ;
 They lightly rise,
 And scale the skies—
And groves and gardens still abound ;
 For where no shoot
 Could else take root,
The peaks are shelved and terraced round ;
Eastward appear, in mingled growth,
The mulberry and maize above—
The trellis'd vine extends to both
The leafy shade they love ;
Looks out the white wall'd cottage here,
The lowly chapel rises near ;
Far down the foot must roam, to reach
The lovely lake and bending beach ;
While chestnut green, and olive grey,
Chequer the steep and winding way.”

THIS, the most charming of the lakes of Lombardy, lies a little to the south of the foot of the great Splugen Pass over the Alps, whose wild and terrific scenery, full of rocks, precipices, chasms, and roaring

cascades, prepares the traveller, by the force of contrast, the more to enjoy the calm and delicious beauties of hill and wood, village and water, which here, in varied forms and colours, arrest the eye and delight the heart. "Bold, bare mountains form the southern boundary;—mountains still more bold and bare, the snowy Alps overtopping all, are the background to the north. This lake is not like Zurich or Geneva—not like Lucerne or Thun. The banks are not so gently sloping as the former, nor so bold and precipitous as the latter. It has more numerous villages and habitations covering its sides, but they are not at all Swiss-like. The houses are not of wood, but stone; not in the cottage, but the villa style. The larger ones are classical in aspect, with columns, arcades, and terraces, carrying thought back to Roman times, while the churches, many of them at least, are very Romanesque and Lombardic—with the tall campanile shooting up most gracefully amidst fig-trees, pomegranates, and vines. Distant boats, languidly sailing about on a hot day, look like wearied birds; and those which come near, with their awnings, and flags of white and red, are generally found to be brimful of life."*

Eighteen hundred years ago, the two Plinies who lived on its shores, the younger of them being born at Como, admired and praised the scenery of this far-famed lake, the latter speaking generally of its loveliness, and the former of its richly wooded banks—features which, after the lapse of centuries, remain the same. The architecture is changed; the manners and customs of the people are changed; what belongs to

* "Scenes in other Lands," by John Stoughton, p. 194.

the work of man is changed ; but the hills are as green, and the waters as clear, and the sky as blue as ever : what belongs to the work of God is unchanged, and the traveller in the nineteenth century sees there what those illustrious Romans beheld in days of yore.

There is a very remarkable natural curiosity on the shore of the lake at Pliniana, so called, not because Pliny is supposed to have lived on the spot, but because he has minutely described the curiosity to which we refer. In speaking of it we cannot do better than employ this ancient writer's words, which are found inscribed on the hall of the building that incloses the phenomenon. "There is a spring which rises in a neighbouring mountain, and running among the rocks is received into a little banqueting room, from whence, after the force of its current is a little restrained, it falls into the Larian Lake. The nature of the spring is extremely surprising ; it ebbs and flows regularly three times a day. The increase and decrease is plainly visible, and very entertaining to observe. You sit down by the side of the fountain, and whilst you are taking a repast and drinking its water, which is extremely cool, you see it gradually rise and fall. If you place a ring or anything else at the bottom when it is dry, the stream reaches it by degrees till it is entirely covered, and then again gently retires from it ; and if you wait, you may see it thus advance and recede three times successively."

It should be noticed that the elder Pliny differs from the younger in his account of the time when the increase and decline of the waters occur, for the former tells us it happens every hour. At the present day, some inform

us that the ebb and flow are irregular ; but some concur in stating that it takes place, usually, three times in the four-and-twenty hours. Stormy weather affects and disturbs the course of the phenomenon, and this fact led Mr. Eustace to attempt a solution of the mystery. He remarked that down the cavities among the hills, the west wind, which blows regularly every day, is wont to rush, ruffling the waters and carrying the waves against the sides of the cavern, where, just above its ordinary level, there are little fissures or holes. "The water, raised by the impulse which it receives from the wind, rises to these fissures, and passing through them, trickles down through the crevices that communicate with the fountain below, and gradually fills it. In stormy weather the water is impelled with greater violence, and flows in greater quantities till it is nearly exhausted, or at last reduced too low to be raised again to the fissures. Hence, on such occasions the fountain fills with rapidity first, and then dries up or rather remains low, till the reservoir regains its usual level, and impelled by the wind begins to ebb again."

Perhaps the richest points of view which we have on this lake, where all is rich, are in the neighbourhood of Bellagio, where the water divides into two arms, the one stretching to Lecco, the other to Como. Very beautiful indeed are the prospects which here open, whichever way you turn your eyes. It is not very far from the promontory of Bellagio, that we come to an elegant villa with terraces, gardens, colonnades, and statues, situated on the shore of the Como branch, which is supposed, with some reason, to be on the site

of one of Pliny's favourite mansions. The remains of Roman foundations and broken columns, which have been found just by under the waters of the lake, are considered to favour the supposition. But while the classical student looks with deep interest on this memento of a great Roman name, the Christian mind will turn with deeper feeling to contemplate another spot hard by, connected with nobler associations. It is an island, known by the name of S. Giovanni, very green and woody, with the white houses of a little town grouped among the trees; verdant hills and glittering waterfalls appear in the background of the picture. This sequestered and romantic place is said to have been a refuge for some of the early Christians, during the first three centuries, when persecution drove them from their homes, and they "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and a more enduring substance." So numerous were the refugees, that they formed a town in the midst of this beautiful island, which from the circumstances of their banishment took the name of *Christopolis*. No records, that we are aware, remain of their character and history; but as one sails past the scene of their sufferings and constancy, imaginary but probable pictures of these confessors will arise before the eye of the mind, and they will be seen in solitary or social prayer under the shadow of the trees, or within the walls of some humble habitation, or equally humble church. Gatherings to hear the reading of God's word, or the preaching of the faith of Jesus, will also come up before the fancy; nor will there fail thoughts of their daily toil

to provide the necessaries of life, and amongst these old Italian Christians, there will seem to pass before us the corn-grower and the mechanic, the grape-gatherer and the fisherman. Legends of another kind are also associated with the island of Giovanni. It is said that one of the monarchs of the Longobards here discovered certain Roman treasures, which he caused to be conveyed to Pavia; that the Greek exarchs here found shelter, and successfully resisted the assaults of their Longobardic invaders; and that the people of the island rose to the rank of a little independent republic, bringing within their territory some portion of the neighbouring lands, and even maintaining war with the city of Como.

Como was originally a Greek colony. In process of time it rose to importance, and in the days of the Plinies it was in a flourishing condition. It had its temples and porticoes, its gates and villas, its statues and monuments, like other cities of the Roman empire; and much it owed to the distinguished philosopher and statesman, with whose name, ever since his time, it has been associated. The younger Pliny established a school at Como for the education and support of free children; he built a temple which was adorned with busts of the emperors, and devoted for the benefit of this his native town a legacy which had been bequeathed to him. Here, probably, he pursued those domestic occupations which he describes in his famous *Epistles*, and perhaps also enjoyed within the halls of his birth-place intercourse with some of his illustrious Roman friends. Tacitus, Suetonius, and Quintilian were of that number. Como slips out of the notice of history

till we reach the period of the twelfth century. Then the city, which had been dependent on Milan, aspired to independence, and became involved in war with that powerful republic. In 1127, it was taken after a long siege, its fortifications were destroyed, and it was left desolate. But, under Frederic Barbarossa in 1155, it was restored, and afterwards retained its position as a republic for two centuries, until it fell into the ambitious grasp of the Visconti, the lords of Milan. Como has still its silk and other manufactures, but its commercial importance is very far below what it was formerly. Some of its buildings are very famous, and afford high gratification to the artist, the architect, and the antiquary. The marble Duomo is the work of centuries, and was begun in 1396; the cupola was not finished till 1732: hence it exhibits a great variety of design and execution. The style is Lombardic blended with Gothic and Renaissance, and the sculptures on the lower portions of the pilasters and of the façade are very curious. They are of symbolic religious import, and include the fountain, the vine, and the lily. The interior consists of a nave, two aisles, transept, and choir, enriched with gilding, paintings, monuments, and stained glass. Two grotesque animals at the entrance are said to be remains of the porch of an earlier cathedral.

There is a Town Hall of black marble not far from the Duomo, bearing the date of 1215, and remaining a monument of the independence of the old republic of Como. The church of San Fedele belongs to Lombard times, though the interior is modern. The gateways of Como are of the middle age, and these interesting

specimens of the picturesque fortifications of that period carry back our thoughts at once to the times of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, when crowds of steel-clad men, with spear and bow and battle-axe, passed to and fro beneath those frowning arches. The appearance of Como from the lake is very striking; the quay—having in front, lines of Italian boats covered with striped awnings, and behind, a row of houses and shops, with long outspread eastern-looking blinds—has altogether an oriental aspect; while the Duomo lifts itself up with a very lordly air over the rest of the town, telling of the dominion which a corrupted form of Christianity has long had over the people, in this one of the fairest portions of God's beautiful earth.

MIDSUMMER EVE; OR, GRATITUDE.

“WELL, my friend, you may now consider yourself fairly landed in the ‘unknown region,’—for such the greater part of our emerald isle is still to Englishmen. And there goes the last symptom of modern civilization that you are likely to witness for a while.” These words were addressed by Mr. De Burgh to his fellow-traveller, as they saw the Dublin train, from which they had just alighted, move on, after depositing them at one of the stations in a southern county. “Prepare,” he continued, “for encountering the barbarism of our native manners and customs—”

“Of which this equipage is a specimen, I presume,” replied his friend, as they seated themselves in a somewhat dilapidated-looking covered car, which had been procured to carry them to the end of their journey.

The country through which they drove wore rather a wild, uncultivated appearance, at least in the Englishman’s eyes; while the Irish traveller, contrary to his usual custom, was very silent, looking out occasionally from between the curtains of their vehicle at the various objects which they passed, with an expression of excitement. At last, letting down the glass of a little square window, which was in the front part of the car, he cried,—

“Look, Annesley, at that distant hill: it is Slieverna—you can trace its blue outline distinctly. At the other

side of it lie the village, the old manor house, the home from which I have been so long absent."

"Yes, I see a hill," his companion replied, taking one glance through the small vista of the window, "and am sorry to perceive that it is so far off, as our resting-place lies beyond it. But, De Burgh, this recognition of old familiar scenes appears to cause you a degree of agitation incomprehensible to one of my phlegmatic and unpoetical temperament. It may, perhaps, be partly because I left home and went abroad at so early an age, but I have no idea of these local emotions."

"Yet your great countryman, Dr. Johnson, asserts, that to abstract the mind from all such would be impossible if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish if it were possible ; because whatever withdraws us from the influence of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings."

"Then you ought to have arrived at the climax of that dignity by this time, De Burgh ; for I believe you indulge much in reminiscences and hopes : but, begging your and Dr. Johnson's pardon, I think the poet has more good sense than either of you when he says,

" 'Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant,
Let the dead Past bury its dead ;
Act, act in the living Present,
Heart within, and God o'er head.' "

"Most true!" Mr. De Burgh answered, at once becoming quite serious ; "oh for grace so to influence the 'heart within,' that we may act every moment to

the glory and in the service of Him who has commanded us to 'redeem the time!' However, Annesley, I cannot perceive that there is anything wrong in these local emotions upon which you seem inclined to animadvert. For instance, the love of home and country, which seems implanted in the mind of every human being, is nowhere condemned in Scripture; but an example of it is there recorded, which I have ever thought touchingly beautiful; you remember David's longing to drink from the well of his native Bethlehem?"

"Yes, as you probably long to taste the waters of some well-remembered stream that gushes at the foot of yonder hill—preferring it to the mighty Ganges, or the rivers of Burmah, where you have been accustomed to slake your thirst. But tell me, is your return home expected?"

"Home! I have none, Annesley, at least on earth. You are aware that our little patrimony, which had been so long in the family, was in the possession of my only brother, and heavily encumbered with debts when I went to India; and that since our return to England I have ascertained that it has passed into the hands of strangers, and that my brother did not survive the loss."

"Yes, and I cannot but wonder at your determination to spend the remainder of your days in a place where you will be so differently circumstanced from what you may once have anticipated. To live as a tenant, a cottager, on land that belonged to your fathers!—excuse me, De Burgh, but will not the change be melancholy and mortifying?"

"It would once have been so, Annesley. To the natural mind it will probably have an occasional taste

of bitterness still; and when, an aspiring youth, I left this country full of expectation to acquire fame and fortune in a distant land, I could not have imagined it possible to endure returning to it such as I am now: to the world, also, my career will seem to have been marked by nothing but misfortune. Still, my friend, I can positively assert that I look back to it as an exemplification of the truth of the gracious assurance, 'that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.'* Yes, Annesley, in the retrospect of my blighted hopes of preferment—my long captivity among the Burmese—the various sufferings, and the maiming of this poor arm arising from it—I can trace the hand of a loving Father, and say from the heart, Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. You believe me, Annesley?"

"I do. It would to most people appear enthusiasm; but you know I witnessed the power of religion to sustain and comfort you in the time of trial, the *reality* of it. When we first met in the dungeon at Rangoon, and I learned the history of your long captivity, and the sufferings consequent to it, your calm, almost cheerful, state of mind, and that of your faithful follower Connel, was a mystery to me. It was such as could not be accounted for by the buoyancy of spirits said to be characteristic of your country. But, after a while, I found out that you had both been taught to look for happiness to things over which the changes of this world had no control. Was it not so, De Burgh?"

"It was, indeed, my friend; 'I had fainted, unless

* Rom. viii. 28.

I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.* Nor can you wonder that I am able to remember with thankfulness even that fearful dungeon, when you know that it was there I learned to see his goodness."

"Was it not poor Connel who first turned your thoughts to religion?"

"He was the means, but the Holy Spirit of God could alone effect it. That Connel shared my captivity, was truly a providential arrangement. He was a tender nurse to me in time of severe illness, and as I recovered he read his little Bible for me—all the property that he had preserved when we were taken prisoners by those cruel Burmese. He read it for me, Annesley, and then did I indeed experience that 'the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword;† that 'the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple:' and that the 'statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart.'‡"

"You speak with warmth, De Burgh, and feel so too, I believe. I am ignorant, perhaps shamefully so, on these subjects; but I wish you to tell me what particular discovery of the Scriptures so much influenced you."

"This, Annesley; that I was a ruined sinner, and the wonderful love of God in sending his Son to be the propitiation for my sins. *This* is the discovery that fills my heart, or ought to fill it, with such love and gratitude as would lead me to devote my life to his service."

* Psalm xxvii. 18.

† Heb. iv. 12.

‡ Psalm xix. 7, 8.

"And *has* led you, I suppose, to return here and settle as a missionary among these Irish peasants. I wonder, De Burgh, that you would not rather come back to India with me, and employ the superior abilities which you certainly possess, in trying to convert the Hindoos, or your old friends, the idolatrous Burmese."

De Burgh smiled. "It would," said he, "be an undertaking with more of what Dr. Chalmers calls the chivalrous romance of Christianity—unqualified as I am in every way for it—than that which I have chosen. But if I do possess the abilities you give me credit for, believe me, they will be as much in requisition among the Irish peasantry as anywhere I could go to, so far as they may be useful in meeting intellects peculiarly suited to ethical speculation. To say nothing of the early associations that bind me to my own people, and the peculiar interest which I must feel in their spiritual destitution, I am partly influenced in this choice by a slight knowledge of their language which I still retain, and which will greatly facilitate my labours among them. Then I shall have an able auxiliary in Connel, who can read it fluently. In short, I do hope that I may be honoured as the instrument of bringing some of my benighted countrymen into the marvellous light of gospel truth; and, believe me, Annesley, this will make ample amends for whatever mortification may result from my returning home a poor broken-down half-pay officer, without owning as much as I can set my foot on of the little property which belonged to my family for so many generations."

"Yet, as lord of the manor," replied his friend, "you

would have influence which you might use in promoting the spiritual welfare of your tenantry."

"Ah, how often that thought has crossed my mind ! but God has ordered otherwise, and He doeth all things well. However, the spirit of clanship is not quite extinct in remote places like this ; and I am sure some feeling of that kind, and affection and gratitude to my family, will incline our old tenantry to listen to my instructions far more readily than to those of a stranger."

"Gratitude, De Burgh ! It is said the Irish have none."

"It is said by those who never put it to the test by showing them kindness. I firmly believe that whoever tries the experiment can refute the calumny."

"Well, De Burgh, cold as you may deem me, I heartily wish success to your enterprise of trying to evangelize the Irish. I will further own, that from you and your humble friend Connel, too, I first learned the value of real, influential Christianity. When, after various unsuccessful efforts to escape from our Burmess prison, the ingenuity of Connel had formed a feasible plan,—just as all was ready for its accomplishment, and we were elated with hope, my sudden illness rendered my availing myself of it impossible. You and your Irish follower refused to leave me. At the risk of liberty, of life, you delayed till I could accompany you ; and when I expostulated on the danger, and urged you to go, you said that God had already wrought a greater deliverance for you, and you would not leave one of his creatures in such a state as I then was ; but Connel cut the matter short by adding, 'No, sir, He who died for us

has commanded us to do unto others as we would they should do unto us: and we would not like to have you leave us here when you might help to get us out.' So you waited till I could accompany you, and He in whom you trusted did not fail."

"No, 'He hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death.' But say no more of anything I did for you, Annesley; you have more than repaid it by giving me your friendship; of which your taking this trip to visit my poor country is a gratifying proof."

They were now driving round the base of the hill which De Burgh had long before pointed out in the distance; and as they drew near to the entrance of the village, he proposed to his companion that they should alight, and walk through it, which was agreed to.

"See, Annesley, these fine old horse-chestnut trees; I often played under their shade in childhood. That is the churchyard; my father, mother, all are buried there. And, look—the Manor House!"

It was a high, narrow house, with an avenue of limes, now clothed in their richest verdure, leading to it.

"I see," said the Englishman;—"but where are we to get our dinner?"

"Not there, alas!" he replied with some bitterness. "And pardon me for fancying you could take an interest in my *local emotions*, as you call them. The village hotel was formerly at the other end of the street; perhaps dinner of some sort may be had there."

They walked on, and were met by a crowd of young peasants of both sexes, who came along shouting and

huzzaing. One, who seemed to be the leader, held out his hat to the strangers, saying, "Something for the bonfire, please your honours."

"Bonfire;" exclaimed De Burgh, "surely they cannot have heard that I—What is the bonfire for, my friend?"

"Midsummer eve, to be sure, your honour."

A trifle was thrown into the hat, and the travellers passed on.

"This is a strange coincidence," said the Irish gentleman, who seemed so much struck by it as to have forgotten his friend's apparent want of sympathy in his feelings. "It was on Midsummer eve that Connel and I bade farewell to this place, and here are we returned on the same day."

They now had reached the village inn, and the best refreshments which it afforded were speedily prepared for them. The landlord was a new comer, who did not recognise De Burgh, and that gentleman partook of his share of the entertainment in abstracted silence. When it was ended his friend said,

"How soon, De Burgh, do you intend to make yourself known to these villagers, whose love and gratitude you expect to have outlived time, and change of fortune?"

"When Connel arrives, who is travelling from the station on the cart with our luggage. He was anxious that no intimation of our arrival should transpire until he presented himself to his own family, who, of course, suppose him to be dead. During our long captivity no news of us could reach home; and, as you are aware, we returned at once when it was over."

“Is not Connel your foster-brother?”

“Yes ; and his accompanying me to India was one proof that love and gratitude exist in the Irish heart, of which you seem doubtful. The offer of a commission in the army for me, at a time when our affairs were so embarrassed that there seemed no hope of providing for me in any way, was accepted gladly by myself, but with great reluctance by my mother, whose favourite child I was. The order to join immediately a regiment just about to embark for India, was a sad blow to that dear parent, whose health was such that she could not expect to see me again. You have no relish for old reminiscences, Annesley, so I will say nothing of her but that she was a devoted Christian, and that her delight was to lead others to the knowledge and love of the Saviour. She had been the means of doing so to my foster-brother, Connel Maguire, who, though he had been reared a Roman Catholic, profited by her instructions more than her own son did. To have him accompany me was the only earthly consideration that afforded her any comfort in the prospect of my departure. His father and mother yielded to her entreaties ; it was hard to part with the young man, who, notwithstanding his apostasy, was the best of sons ; but how could they refuse the mistress anything ? Poor Connel also agreed, although, as I afterwards learned, he was about to be united to a farmer’s daughter, to whom he had been long attached. It was on Midsummer eve that we set out, riding some miles to meet a coach which passed at daybreak. The bonfire was blazing merrily, just where they are now preparing it, at the end of the village, when we went by. The

dance round it was about to commence, but the piper flung down his bagpipe, all gaiety was forgotten, and the greater number of the peasants assembled there followed us for some miles, with lamentations and kind wishes."

"Well," his friend replied, "the bonfire to-night will celebrate your return. But you have not told me the meaning of these annual rejoicings. Is it an ancient custom?"

"Very ancient, and also oriental, derived no doubt from our Phœnician progenitors, who were fire-worshippers. These Midsummer illuminations, which you will presently see all over the country, were intended to propitiate Bel, or Baal, the god of fire, or the sun, that he might ripen the harvest. In the vernacular tongue they are called *Bael thuine*, or the fires of Baal. Every cow in the neighbourhood is made to leap through them as a preservative against the influence of evil genii, and every hearth is lit at that holy flame; but this is not the only vestige of paganism to be found in our country."

"I was not aware of that," said Mr. Annesley, "when I wondered that you did not prefer labouring among people who were altogether idolaters, to those who were acquainted with Christianity, however corrupted."

"It is true," his friend replied, "that in remote parts of Ireland may be found remains of heathenism, and pagan rites still practised, far more obvious than those we shall witness this evening, which are now no more than an unmeaning and harmless play, their origin being quite lost sight of: and it is strange that while

England sends preachers of God's truth to grapple with idolatry in all parts of the world, what is so near home should have remained so long unregarded. But, Annesley, it seems to me that Christianity, corrupted and distorted as it is by the Roman Catholic church, calls just as loudly for help to all who love the truth as it is in Jesus."

The travellers now walked forth together to taste the fresh evening air, and every breath of it was loaded with perfume as they crossed a hay-field at the back of the village. Every object at which De Burgh gazed was, as it were, engraved with some memorial of his younger days, and the feelings they excited were of a mingled character, in which what was painful predominated over what was pleasing. But, such as they were, he had to keep them from his friend, who could not sympathize in such emotions; and he almost envied his friend's calmness, while the poet's words occurred to his mind—

"Dearly bought the hidden treasure
Finer feelings can bestow ;
Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure
Thrill with notes of deepest woe."

"Let us ascend this little eminence," said he. "Connel Maguire's cabin stood at the top of it, and I cannot resist the desire I feel, to know whether any one is there still to welcome him."

They came to the cottage, which was a snug little place, embosomed in an orchard. An old man and woman sat on a bench outside the door: a young woman was near them, settling some ripe strawberries in a basket on leaves, as if for sale.

"It is my nurse and her husband," whispered De Burgh. He then addressed them, saying that he and his companion had come a long journey, and would be glad to rest for a while.

"Kindly welcome!" burst from every lip. Chairs were brought out, on which the gentlemen seated themselves.

"May be your honours might be thirsty," said the young woman, handing a leaf of her fruit to each.

"Do these strawberries grow here?"

"Yes, sir," the old man answered, "on a bank at the top of the orchard, that the poor mistress got her own gardener to plant for us years ago."

"And you sell the fruit?"

"We do, sir, since the bad times. People must sell everything now, sir, to keep body and soul together. Mary there is going to a fair to-morrow with her father, and she will sell the strawberries, as she does everything else that she can to help us."

The young woman had just issued from the cottage with a bowl of goat's-milk, which she presented to the strangers.

"Then this young woman is not your daughter," said De Burgh.

"Ohone! no, your honour. More than a year ago we lost our only daughter." The old man hung down his head; the old woman threw her apron over her face, and rocked her body to and fro for some minutes.

"Then our friend Connel will find a vacancy here," whispered the Englishman.

"Yes," replied De Burgh, "it is the common lot.

“ ‘There is no flock, however watch’d and tended,
But one dead lamb is there;
There is no fireside, howe’er defended,
But has one vacant chair.’ ”

“However,” continued the old man, clearing his voice, and looking up again, “God is good to us, to give us such a neighbour as Mary; with only our one boy to mind our little bit of land, we could not have got on at all without her, and we old and sickly.”

“And she was near being our daughter once,” said the old woman, “only he that was to bring her to us went beyond sea, and never came back. Many a good offer she had since, but for his sake she would not take them, and she did what she could for us. But she won’t have to do it longer. These are the last strawberries we’ll ever gather out of the old orchard, and before the apples are ripe that are on the trees now, I suppose we’ll be in the poorhouse.”

“And why so?” one of the strangers inquired.

“Ah! that’s the worst story of all, sir. Because the family—they that owned it five hundred years and more—have lost the place; and news came to-day to the steward that’s minding the Manor House, that a strange gentleman has bought everything, and we could not expect that he’d leave us our cabin and bit of land as the family did. But whether he would or not, bad luck to him, I say, and may he—”

. Mary interrupted him.—“Oh! don’t talk that way, John Maguire. That’s not the way our dear mistress taught us. That’s not according to the book that poor Connel left me to be reading to you; here is what it says.” She took a well-worn Testament from her

pocket, and read aloud—"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."* "And sure we don't know that the new master will persecute us,—he might be very good."

"Whatever he is," cried the old man, "he won't be one of the old stock, and we could never like him."

The Englishman looked at his friend; but one glance at his countenance made him desirous of changing the subject. He took some silver from his purse, and handed it to Maguire, saying,

"We are in your debt for your nice strawberries and milk."

The old peasant seemed to be greatly shocked.

"What, sir! is it to pay for what you ate at our own house, you would? Oh! we're not come down quite so low entirely yet. But your honour is a stranger, and did not know our ways," he added, returning the money.

The sun had gone down, and as twilight began to cast its sombre tint over the surrounding landscape, bonfires appeared in every direction, coming out like little stars twinkling here and there in the distance. A large bright blaze burst forth in the village below, and its appearance was hailed by shouts, the blowing of horns, and other tokens of acclamation. As the sound met the old man's ear, he cried,

"Oh! there's what seems like the death-bell to me; it brings back the evening they left us, never to come again."

* Matt. v. 44.

His wife tried to explain.

"It was our eldest son, Connel, gentlemen; and our foster-son too, the master's brother. This night ten years they went away to foreign parts, and seven years ago we heard of a battle that they were in, and that they were missing when it was over; and we never heard a word about them since, and never will, I suppose."

And she began to weep. Mary attempted to comfort her.

"Everything is possible with God," said she. "And if we never see Connel again here, oh! what is to hinder us from seeing him in a better place? Does not that blessed book that he left us tell us of One who is able 'to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him?'* And does it not tell us about such as Connel was—those that love God—not to sorrow when they fall asleep, because they sleep in Jesus, and when He comes, God will bring them with Him?"†

"And I can tell you from the same blessed book," said De Burgh, "that the God in whom you trust, Mary Gormen, is rich in mercy, and even in *this* world may reward your faithful affection for your old friend."

On hearing her own name, she turned towards him with surprise, and after looking steadfastly for a few moments at his face, cried out,

"It is he! it is Mr. Edward, the young master! and where is Connel?"

"Here!" exclaimed Connel, rushing from behind a tree, where he had been standing for some minutes. "Here I am, Mary, mother, father, never to leave you again, I hope."

* Heb. vii. 25.

† See 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.

But we have no intention of trying to sketch the scene that followed, and it can be easily imagined. When the inhabitants of the cottage had become somewhat tranquil, and were able to realize to their minds that the two sunburnt men before them were indeed the very same who had left them ten years ago in the bloom of early manhood, the old couple seemed to hail De Burgh's return with just as intense delight as they did that of their son. But no earthly joy is without alloy. Theirs was damped by the thought that his return could not reinstate him in the possessions of his ancestors, and that the new master was still to be expected. Poor old Maguire's bitter feelings on that subject seemed about to revive ; but De Burgh said,

"Come, Mr. Annesley, let us leave Connel alone with his friends for awhile. Doubtless he and they will unite together in thanksgiving to that gracious Being who has brought him safe through so many dangers. And, Connel, I think you will not forget to implore Him who orders all things, that the new owner of this place may prove to be one who will not only try to forward the temporal welfare of those around him, but will, in dependence on help from above, use all the means in his power to bring them to a knowledge of the truth that maketh wise unto salvation."

The friends descended to the village, but soon found that they were no longer *incog*. Connel Maguire, in passing through it, had been recognised by two or three of his old acquaintances, and the news of the long-lost travellers having returned spread rapidly. The unaffected delight with which De Burgh was welcomed,

first by one, then by another of his father's former tenantry who hastened to meet him, fully proved that neither time nor altered circumstances had changed the feelings of their warm hearts. Even the sad conviction which he found it difficult to impress upon their minds, that he was not come back as lord of the manor, but to sojourn as a stranger on his native soil, could not at first damp their joy. However, its influence was felt before they had reached the end of the street; and with that tact which characterizes the Irish peasantry, they consulted together as to the propriety of having public rejoicings on the occasion, fearful that by so doing they might wound his feelings, and such demonstrations seem like a mockery of his present position among them. Although there were various opinions on this point, the people seemed to be unanimous in seeking opportunities to serve their old master's son. This was manifested in many ways. An elderly man, who was much better dressed than the others, and looked like a respectable farmer, came up to him, and said,—

“A thousand welcomes to you, Mr. Edward. Don't you remember me, sir? John O'Rourke, that held a farm under the family. I got on right well since, sir; I pulled down the old cabin, and built a snug decent house. There's a good bedroom, sir. To be sure it is not fit for the like of you, a *real* gentleman. But, if I am not too bold to ask it, if your honour would be pleased to lodge in it—”

He was interrupted by another speaker.

“No, no; sure you remember *me*, Mr. Edward,—the sexton. And our rector would be proud to see you

at the Glebe when he hears you are come, and that is the fittest place for you."

By this time the friends, attended by a large crowd, had gone through the village, and reached the old-fashioned gateway of the Manor House. They stopped, and gazed at the lonely-looking edifice through the long vista of lime-trees that shaded the grass-grown avenue with their luxuriant foliage.

"Come, let us walk up here, De Burgh," said the Englishman; "I should like to visit your early home: will you show it me before the evening grows darker?"

"De Burgh's lip quivered a little while he replied, "I will;—better visit it now than when it is filled with strangers." Still he thought the request rather strange, and a new proof of his friend's want of sensibility; and such the people who overheard it pronounced it to be, while they followed the travellers up the avenue.

When they reached the house, the two gentlemen ascended the flight of steps that led to the hall-door, and rang the bell. A respectable-looking man opened the door. Annesley placed a letter in his hand, which he read, and immediately making a low bow, said, "You are welcome, sir. We did not expect you for a few days, or things would have been better prepared; but you will be so good as to excuse. Boys, boys," he cried, addressing the crowd, "this is the gentleman who has purchased the place—your new master,—have you not a welcome for him?"

A murmur of surprise, mingled with something that sounded like notes of disapprobation, arose. At length one voice, but in a rather unimpassioned tone, was heard to say, "Welcome, your honour!" And another,

in a still more constrained manner, got out, "Long may you reign." But the others were silent, and the men mostly pulled their hats over their faces, and turned as if to go away.

"Stay, my friends," cried Mr. Annesley, "I want to say a few words to you. There is a mistake here. It is true that this house and property were purchased by my agent, and in my name, but it was for this gentleman, Mr. Edward De Burgh, who is the owner and your landlord, or master, as you call it. So, my friends, I think you will now say from the heart, 'Welcome, and long may you reign!'" He then flung them a purse. "Here, return to the bonfire, and spare neither expense nor trouble in raising such a blaze as will notify to the country, for miles around, that some event far more extraordinary and joyful than the return of Midsummer eve has occurred here. My friend and I will join you after a while."

He then turned to De Burgh, who was as pale as death, looking bewildered, as if he could not comprehend what was going on ; and, taking his arm led him gently inside the hall-door, which he closed just as a shout, or rather yell, of ecstasy burst from the crowd outside. They entered an apartment, and sat down ; De Burgh at last finding utterance, by saying,—

"I scarcely understand—what is all this, Annesley ?"

"Nothing, De Burgh ; but that as I am now convinced your wild Irish people are quite susceptible of gratitude, as well as of many other good qualities, I want to prove to you that we cold English are not altogether without it. De Burgh, do you think I can ever forget that I owe you, under Heaven, my liberty,

my life ? Believe me, my friend, that by consenting to what enables me to make so many warm hearts happy, you only add to the debt I already owe you."

"Oh, Annesley !—the magnitude of the gift—"

"Oblige me, and never refer to it again : but listen, while I open my mind to you on another matter. I told you before, that from you and your humble follower, Connel, I first learned to admire the excellency of real, influential religion ; but I did not tell you that you were the means of teaching me to feel the comparative insignificance of everything else. I am a man of few words, De Burgh, and will briefly tell you that, the Lord being my helper, I am resolved to serve him the rest of my life. His wonderful love in dying for sinners, the whole scheme of redemption, of which I was so long in almost heathen ignorance, have deeply impressed my mind. In short, I feel gratitude—yes, deep gratitude—to Him who has done so much for me ; but a painful sense of the ignorance, the darkness in which I still am, makes me fear that any attempt to prove it by trying to serve him, or that classing myself with his enlightened people, would be great presumption."

"Oh, no, no, dear Annesley !" cried De Burgh, who had listened to these words with an expression of intense pleasure. "Remember, my friend, that it is written,

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness ;'* and it has been well remarked, that 'a connexion obtains between integrity of purpose and clearness of discernment ; insomuch that a duteous conformity to what is right, is generally followed up by a ready and luminous discernment of what is true.' We have all,

* Psalm cxii. 4.

more or less, to complain of ignorance and darkness, my friend; 'nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.' " *

"Well, De Burgh, you will not refuse to assist in forwarding this my first humble attempt at being, however remotely, concerned in giving my fellow-sinners an opportunity of learning religious truth; neither can you wonder that I feel particular anxiety for its diffusion in *this* place. You know it was from the natives of this place that I learned it myself. You have often told me of the immense amount of good that an Irish landlord, who had the spiritual improvement of the peasantry at heart, and who proved by kindness that he really cared for their welfare, might effect. You said that his influence could even compete with priestly authority. Now, my friend, do you be one of those—and I hope the number may greatly increase—who, in reliance on help from above, try the experiment. I must, as you are aware, return to India, where I hope to expend the wealth which God has given me in promoting his cause among my fellow-creatures; but the progress of your mission here will always be an interesting subject to me. You will write often, and, I trust, be able to give such accounts as will prove that your return has been a blessing to these warm-hearted people, so that the best and most enduring happiness may for the future be associated in their minds with the rejoicings of Midsummer eve."

* Phil. iii. 16.

SABBATH EVENING.

THE day hath pass'd in praise and prayer,
Now evening comes more still and fair;
The holy heavens are free from gloom,
The earth is green, and gay with bloom;
The blackbird's whistled note is high,
Ringing in woodland melody;
And though the cushat 'mid the grove
Be 'plaining, still his plaint is love.
How calm, how still this hallow'd eve!
Methinks the heart might cease to grieve
While gazing on that arch so blue,
With mercy mirror'd in its hue,
And think how short a time may bring
Repose from earthly suffering;
Or lend a wing to mount above
The spheres in which the planets move.
The vesper star begins to beam,
But scarce its image strikes the stream,
For summer's faintness o'er it creeps,
And every bolder sparkle keeps
Entangled 'mid the misty light
Which fills the azure vault of night;
While earth and sky appear imbued
With the deep soul of solitude.

If we could feel as men should feel
When heaven and earth their sweets reveal,
Our selfish sorrows all would cease
On such a solemn eve of peace ;
And nature's stillness would compose
Our souls, and dissipate our woes ;
And from our spirits softly call
Pure hopes and thoughts devotional.

BETHUNE.



THE MONARCH MOUNTAIN.

MONT BLANC, the "Monarch Mountain" of the Alps, is the highest in Europe, lifting its head perpendicularly to nearly three English miles above the level of the Mediterranean Sea. A perpetual mantle of snow covers its acclivities to the extent of several thousand feet. Pyramids of ice appear on its sides, assuming the shapes of turreted castles, palaces, cathedrals, and an almost infinite variety of other forms. Mighty avalanches reflect the most brilliant colours, and the sublimest scenes rise on the traveller's view, as he stands midway on its heights, overwhelming his mind with impressive thoughts and emotions. Nothing short of actual observation can convey an adequate idea of the solitary grandeur and gigantic proportions of this far-famed eminence.

"Snow piled on snow, the mass appears
The gather'd winters of a thousand years."

Mr. Justice Talfourd has described his impressions when gazing upward on Mont Blanc.

"I soon found myself," he says, "directly beneath the lowest skirts of the mountain, and, at a sudden turn of the road, in immediate neighbourhood with the purest snow, against which the scarlet berries of the mountain-ash, which often enriched the wild wood, formed a delicious contrast. At the top of one of the eminences I stopped enchanted; a deep rose-coloured light suffused the floating curtain of snow, some of whose vast fields descended to the glacier near me—not a

glimpse for a moment; the light rested, then slowly retreated from the skirts of the mountain upward, and marked out the round small globe of white which forms its highest top, by lingering there for some minutes after the domes and pinnacles were left in cold grey twilight."

Those who have spent a night on Mont Blanc, have spoken in glowing language of the impressions made on their minds by the scenes they beheld.

"It was a brilliant night," says Dr. Barry; "beneath a dark and cloudless vault, the snowy mantle of the mountain shone resplendent with the beams of a full Italian moon. The guides lay buried in the deepest sleep. Thus, in the midnight hour, at the height of 10,000 feet, I stood alone—my resting-place a pinnacle of rock, that towered darkly above the frozen wilderness from which it, isolated, rose. Below me, the yawning rifts and uproarious desolation of the glacier presented an appalling picture of dangers scarcely gone by; around and above was a sea of fair but treacherous snow, whose hidden perils yet lay before us. I saw the chain of Jura, and the distant top of many an unknown Alp—an earnest of the prospect from still more lofty regions; yet among them, Mont Buet's white dome, a warning monument of Eschen's fate, [a Dane who perished in an attempt to ascend the mountain,] forbade the attempt to go up higher. The vale of Chamouni lay at the mountain's foot; and, now and then broken by the deep thunder of an avalanche, the profoundest silence reigned. It seemed the vastest, wildest, sternest of nature's prodigies reposing; now starting as in a fitful dream, then sinking again into the stillest calm.

The influence upon my mind of that poetic 'vision of the night,' I must despair of ever being able to communicate to others; and yet the scene itself was 'a picture in my memory,' standing alone, unalterable by time. It held me till an hour and a half had passed away, when a recollection of the coming day's fatigues rendered it proper again to try, at least, to take repose."

Many fruitless attempts were made to gain the summit of Mont Blanc; at length, in 1786, the feat was accomplished by Dr. Paccard and his guide Jacques Balmat. Their exploit was attended with much danger and hardship. They suffered from intense cold, and had to ascend considerable distances sideways to break the force of the violent and piercing winds. Their provisions froze in their pockets, the ink congealed in the inkhorns, and the thermometer sank 13° below freezing point. On their return to the valley, their lips were much swollen, their faces excoriated, and their eyes almost blinded by the intense reflection of the fields of snow over which they had passed. Since that time, many adventurers have beheld the grand spectacle from the hoary head of this mountain.

The panorama, as witnessed from the summit of Mont Blanc, is most imposing and magnificent. "The actual range of sight," says Mr. Auldjo, "though limited by Alps in various directions, comprehends nearly all Sardinia, the western half of Switzerland, one third of Lombardy, and an eighth of France."

"All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around those summits, as to show
How earth may pierce to heaven, yet leave vain man below."

GLAUNGRENAN; OR, THE SUNNY VALLEY.

It was a bright summer morning; breakfast was over, and the family at N—— House, in a southern county of Ireland, were dispersing to pursue their usual employments or pleasures. Mr. N——’s sister Amelia, a neat-looking little woman, with a very pleasing countenance, appeared in shawl and bonnet, as if ready for a walk.

“On what mission of mercy is Aunt Amie bound to-day?” inquired one of her young nieces.

“I wish, aunt,” said another, “that you would, for once, rest from your labours, and accompany me to the flower-show.”

“Or me, to return some visits,” added a third. “I wonder, Aunt Amie, why it is you do not tire of going to schools, and talking and reading in cottages, when I am so often weary of drawing-room company; and when we all meet in the evening, not one of us looks so happy, so quietly happy, as you do.”

Aunt Amie—for by that familiar diminutive she was known, not only in the family, but in the neighbourhood—replied, “I trust, my dear, you may yet understand by experience what it is that makes me look so.” And with a kind smile she set out on her walk.

“There was truth in her niece’s remark: this lady did always look *quietly happy*, because her hopes for time and for eternity were placed above the changing scenes

of earth ; they were fixed upon the Rock of Ages, the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore the peace of God kept her heart and mind. There is even more than a feeling of security, or a hope of future bliss,—there is a sense of present enjoyment, experienced by the renewed mind of the believer, which the children of this world can neither feel nor understand. This was once so beautifully described in a sermon that we cannot refrain from quoting the preacher's words : “ No one, whose inmost spirit has been busy with the New Testament, can fail to be aware that there is everywhere in it a close identity of nature intimated between the heavenly world itself, and a state of spiritual-mindedness on earth, altogether far beyond the mere notion of future recompense. It is as if heaven itself were already realized in the soul, and that some rather accidental than essential hindrance delayed its consummation. As if the sanctified spirit were already *there*, but, from a temporary defect of vision, could not yet see or enjoy it.”

Under the influence of a feeling such as this, Aunt Amie passed along with a light step through the shrubberies and lawns of her brother's demesne, till she reached a small hamlet of cottages, where she made a few calls, each having some kind object in view. “ The morning is so lovely,” thought she, “ that I may extend my walk to my favourite Glaungrenan, and visit the widow Kelly in her illness.”

She turned off the road, pursuing her course over meadows, where the perfume of new-mown hay filled every breeze ; or through lanes hedged in by the still more fragrant white-thorn, and furze-bushes, covered with their rich golden blossoms. The verdure beneath

her feet was studded with flowers, and loud and merry were the songs of birds over her head. Her heart was cheered and elevated by a kind of pleasure in viewing the beauties of creation, of which the most refined natural taste cannot partake; for to the Christian only is given that child-like spirit of adoption which enables him to appropriate these works, the fairest, the grandest, to himself; and his right to do so is registered in the word of truth,—“All things are yours,”—“the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.”*

Miss N—— at length reached her favourite Glaungrenan, or “*The Sunny Valley*,” and thought it had never appeared to more advantage. The hills that inclosed, the stream which rippled through it, and, on one side, an orchard in full bloom, were all bright with sunshine. “Scenes such as this would almost make one forget that there was sorrow in the world,” thought she; but at that moment her eyes rested on an object which reminded her of its presence.

On a bank, not far from where she stood, was seated a young peasant. She recognised him at once as the son of Mrs. Kelly, whom she was going to visit: he bore a remarkably good character, supporting his mother and sister by the labour of his hands, and was a universal favourite on account of the gaiety and good-humour of his disposition. But the usual happy expression of his countenance had now given place to a look of great dejection. He sat with folded arms, gazing up the glen, to where the blue smoke of the cottage was rising above the trees; and the lady thought she perceived

* 1 Cor. iii. 21. 1 Tim. vi. 17.

that his eyes were red, as if he had been weeping. Ever anxious to soothe the griefs of others, she moved towards him, and said,—

“I am glad to see you, William; but I fear something has distressed you. How is your mother?”

He rose respectfully, and thanked her, saying that his mother had recovered from her illness.

“Then what has happened, Kelly? May I not know?” she asked, in a voice of so much kindness, that it seemed as if he were moved to disclose more than he had intended.

“Not much, Miss Amie: not much, I thank you. Only I was sitting here, looking at Glaungrenan, ma’am, and it looked so beautiful.” He stopped.

“I also was admiring it, William,” said Miss N——, “but I found the gay bright look of everything raise my spirits; nor can I imagine why it depressed yours.”

“Because I must leave it, ma’am!” he answered, with an effort.

“And why?” she asked, with surprise. “What is the cause of this?”

“Then I’ll tell you, Miss Amie—yourself—you are the cause of it.” Seeing her look quite alarmed, he continued:—“Don’t be frightened, Miss Amie; you never did harm to me or mine.”

She requested an explanation, feeling uneasy that she should in any way have occasioned his intention of leaving home, though unable to conjecture how she could be concerned in the matter.

“Well, ma’am, I will tell you what troubles me, though I never mentioned it before, not even to the priest. Please, Miss Amie, rest yourself on this green

bank under the shade of the large tree, and I can stand here near you." These arrangements being made, the young Irishman commenced a narrative of "what troubled him," as he called it; and though no more than a simple account of his own mind for some time past, it was listened to with great interest by the lady to whom he told it.

He began by recalling to her remembrance that she had met him about two years before, when visiting an old man who resided near Glaungrenan, one of the few Protestants in that neighbourhood. Kelly was fond of this person, who had often advised and assisted him in the management of his little farm, and hearing that he was ill, went to see him. While sitting with him, Miss N—— came in, and, after some conversation, took out a Bible, and read aloud the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel by St. John. Kelly was at a loss how to act. He feared the wrath of the priest if he remained to hear the Protestant book, as he deemed it, and his own bigotry was also against his doing so. On the other hand, his old friend would ridicule him for running away; and, worse still, he might offend Miss Amie, who was the master's (or landlord's) sister. The result of these conflicting opinions was that he remained, compromising the matter with his conscience by resolving not to listen. But, truly, the word of God is quick and powerful. His attention was arrested by the very first verse, and he totally forgot his resolution. This portion of Scripture made an impression upon Kelly's mind which he could not exactly describe; but it created an extreme desire to read the whole Bible. He said he was much affected by the love and tender-

ness with which the Lord spoke to his disciples; it was so different from the idea that his religious instructors had given of the Saviour, as a Being whose wrath was to be appeased by penance and prayers. The words, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love," were continually in his thoughts, and he longed to know more about Him who had spoken them; but where could he procure a Bible without danger that the priest would find it out, and curse him?

Some time after this occurrence the old Protestant died, and William Kelly, paying a visit of condolence to his family, who were Roman Catholics, was offered the few books which had belonged to him, as none of them could read. The offer was accepted, and Kelly took them home tied up in his handkerchief. On examining these old volumes he found among them a treasure which one who had experience of the riches and honours of this world pronounced "more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold"—the word of God. He was rejoiced; and every moment that he could command was passed in studying it. Although the meaning of what he read therein was often obscured by its not being written in the Irish language, in which he usually spoke and thought, yet he found great pleasure in the perusal. He commenced with the Book of Genesis, and was much touched by some of the histories which it contained, particularly the pathetic story of Joseph; but with one fact he was struck, namely, that these holy men of old, of whom we read, were not without sin; that there was scarcely one of them of whom some evil was not recorded. "They did not keep God's commandments unbroken; how then could they

abide in his love?" was a question that constantly recurred to his mind.

After some time, a visit from the priest proved that his secret had been discovered. He supposed that this spiritual ruler, whose anger was great, had questioned the widow of his deceased friend as to her way of disposing of the books, judging that a Bible was one of them. Kelly made so hard a struggle to preserve his treasure that the priest reluctantly consented to leave it in his possession, on condition that he would not read the New Testament; he therefore proceeded with the perusal of the Old, and soon came to the twentieth chapter of Exodus. Here he was greatly surprised to find among the commandments delivered by God to Moses, one which was omitted in his own ritual. He could not understand the cause of this, and tried to persuade himself that the Roman Catholics left it out because it was unnecessary. However this reason did not long satisfy his mind, for he read too many instances of awful judgments executed on those who bowed before graven images, to admit of his considering it a light transgression. Several other parts of God's word seemed to be inconsistent with the doctrines he had learned; but, as he expressed it, "the devil always found some way of satisfying his mind that his own church was right;" and on he went, groping in darkness, while occasionally a flash of light from above would show him the danger of his path. He was restless and unhappy. Like the Ethiopian, he would sometimes say, "How can I (understand) except some man should guide me?" and resolve to go to the Protestant clergyman, or to Miss Amie herself, to solve his difficulties.

Then the displeasure of the priest, and of his own family, which would inevitably follow such a step, withheld him, and he would try to banish the subject from his thoughts: but this he was unable to effect; the words of the Lord, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love," seemed to sound in his ear, and he would say, "*Am* I keeping his commandments, while I bow down before images?" He greatly wished to know whether the prohibition was contained in all Bibles, or peculiar to what he supposed was the Protestant version.

Returning home one day from a fair, he walked slowly along, meditating on these things. A man with whom he was unacquainted overtook him, and Kelly, with the courtesy which ever distinguishes the Irish peasant, gave him the usual salutation in the native tongue, which is, "God and Mary and Patrick bless you." The stranger answered in the same language, "I thank you kindly for asking the blessing of the great God on my account: but who were Mary and Patrick, that we should pray to them? Only sinners like ourselves, saved by grace. It is written in the Scriptures, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.'"

"Then you know the Bible, the Irish, the Roman Catholic Bible?" interrupted Kelly eagerly. The stranger replied by taking one from his pocket; and William, in great delight, requested he would read the twentieth chapter of Exodus in Irish, which was immediately complied with.

There he found the commandment against idolatry registered as fully as in the English version.

“And why is it left out, when we are taught the commandments?” said he.

“Because it is contrary to the custom of bowing down before images and pictures, which Roman Catholics practise,” answered the stranger.

Kelly walked on for some time in silence: he then said,—

“It is hard to know what to believe, or what to practise.”

“My friend,” replied the Irish reader, for such he was, “the only safe course is to try everything by the word of God: and do not be persuaded that you have not a right to do this. Hear what St. Paul says, ‘Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.’” *

A long conversation followed, and when they reached Glaungrenan, Kelly invited the reader to pass the night at his cottage, and requested he would always call when he came that way.

With the help of his new friend, the young Irishman procured a Bible in his native language, in which he could study the New Testament as well as the Old, without breaking his promise to the priest. The high enjoyment which he found in doing so he described with great energy; but it was intellectual, not spiritual enjoyment. Now that the difficulty of reading in a language with which he was imperfectly acquainted had been removed, his poetical mind found a rich treat in the magnificent imagery of the prophetic writings. But

* Rom. xv. 4.

gratifying the taste is not sufficient to satisfy the heart and conscience. The more he learned of the holiness of God's law, the more he felt how miserably short he came of its requirements, and that the outward observances on which he had been taught to depend for forgiveness were quite insufficient. "What shall I do to be saved?" was the utterance of his heart. Priestly absolution, penance, temporary suffering in purgatory, and other inventions of men, by which the awakened conscience is so often lulled into deadly slumber, he thought of, and tried them, one after another, by the word of God, but finding no authority for them there, rejected them altogether.

When Kelly met Miss N—— in Glaungrenan he had just made up his mind to leave the communion which taught all these errors. The consequence, he knew, would be persecution from the priests and all whom they could influence ; and, what he dreaded more, sorrow and distress to his family.

"I think to go to America, Miss Amie," he said, "and when I make a little money, to send it for my poor mother and sister to follow me."

"My friend," replied the lady, "do nothing hastily except what is plainly commanded by God. You are right to come out at once from among those whom you believe to be in error ; but when they do persecute you in one place, it will be time enough to flee to another. Trust in Him who can give you strength according to your day. It will be a sad thing to leave your mother."

"Sorry enough I would feel to go, ma'am ; still it is not that which most troubles me. I have broken God's

commandments, bowing before idols, and in other ways too, if I do not mistake. See, ma'am, what is here!" He took out his Irish Bible, and read from it with an expression as if he deeply felt the solemn announcement, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."*

"Quite true, William," said Miss N——; "'all have sinned;' 'there is none righteous.' These are awful words, and they are written 'that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.'† But surely, in reading the Scriptures, you cannot have overlooked that the remedy is pointed out for this terrible evil. We have no righteousness of our own, but are we not told of 'the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe?'"‡

"I see a deal in the Bible about God's goodness in pardoning sinners, ma'am; and I know now that the saints I used to pray to, and the Virgin Mary herself, were pardoned only through his goodness. I often sit here reading of his kindness, his love—how He loved the world so much as to give his only-begotten Son, that sinners might not perish, until my heart melts within me, and the tears fall from my eyes. You heard of the gold they are getting in California, Miss Amie? If I had it all, I would give it at this moment to be able to deserve that love as the saints of old did."

"Deserve it, Kelly! You have just said that they were all pardoned through grace; I do not understand you."

Poor William did not clearly understand himself.

* James ii. 10.

† Rom. iii. 10—19.

‡ Rom. iii. 22

He felt his ruined, helpless state, yet still fancied he must do something to procure that mercy, without which he was doomed to perish. This is, we fear, no uncommon case even with some who have clearer notions of gospel truth than the young Irishman had, as yet, attained to. There is something so mortifying to the pride of the natural heart in accepting salvation as a free gift, that we feel, often perhaps unconsciously, a desire to add something of our own to the finished work of Christ. Miss N—— now endeavoured to direct the mind of Kelly to the fulness and freeness of the pardon offered in the gospel to all who come to Jesus. He acknowledged the loving-kindness that dictated these offers; still he could take no comfort from them, as he fancied it would be presumption to appropriate them to so great a sinner as himself. Aunt Amie was, at length, obliged to leave him and return home, deferring to a future day her visit to his mother. She was grieved that the state of his mind was not more satisfactory, yet trusted that one who, contrary to natural feelings and self-interest, acted up to the measure of light which he had, would be led on from strength to strength till he walked “in full assurance of faith.”* She entreated him to pray for the Holy Spirit’s help, that he might understand and believe the gospel.

“And ponder over these words, William,” she said, marking in his Bible the eighth verse of the second chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. “Before I go, tell me one thing, and consider a little before you answer me. Are you giving up idol-worship, and the

* Heb. x. 22.

other errors in which you have lived, merely because you fear the anger of God if you remain in them ?”

He thought for some time, and then replied, “Why then, I think not, Miss Amie. Even though I were, as I often fear, too great a sinner ever to be forgiven, still I would like to please so good and loving a God.”

The kind heart of Aunt Amie was greatly cheered by this answer. “Surely,” thought she, as she returned home, “there is somewhat of the love that casteth out fear in the feeling which dictated that reply ;—the first faint impulse of the blessed spirit of adoption, that will soon enable this poor man to cry, Abba, Father !”

Miss N——’s mind was much occupied by her interview with Kelly. Although she found a party of gay company assembled at her brother’s table, she could scarcely think of anything else during dinner ; and, when returned to the comparative quietness of the drawing-room, seated herself in a retired corner to dwell upon the same subject. Two of her nieces soon joined her, and seated themselves one at each side of her on the sofa.

“You are not verifying my words, Aunt Amie,” said one ; “you look grave this evening ; have you met with any new case of distress in your walk ?”

“Or perhaps you are tired, dear aunt ?” kindly asked the other.

“Not tired, my dears, but I *did* meet with a case of distress ”

“Well, pray let us hear it. Good-for-nothing though we be, we may in some way assist you to relieve it.”

“I do not think you can, dear girls,” replied Aunt Amie, “but you shall hear it. I met with a poor man,

who has unexpectedly discovered that he owes his landlord much more than he can ever hope to pay ; he is overwhelmed with distress lest he should be cast into prison, and knows not what to do."

"If it be one of papa's tenants we must all intercede for him," interrupted one of the young ladies.

"Thank you, but your papa is not concerned in this matter ; nor is there any need of conciliating the landlord ; an abler Advocate has pleaded already, and this poor man's creditor has offered to cancel the debt, to receive the insolvent into his own family, and secure his future welfare. But, strange to say, this poor ruined debtor will not believe in the kindness of his master's offers, and will not go for the proffered receipt in full, until he has earned some small sum to take in his hand, which there is no probability of his being able to accomplish."

"A strange story indeed," remarked one of the nieces. "This poor man will offend his good master by doubting the sincerity of his offers ; and, if pay day come before he gets the receipt, will be turned out and ruined."

"Of course, and he knows not when that may be," replied Aunt Amie, "but I hope that, before it is too late, he will avail himself of his master's mercy. This is the case of distress which made me thoughtful ; but why should it ? Alas ! I meet with more hopeless ones every day,—persons who have as deeply offended Him to whom they owe everything, yet care not, think not of their miserable state, and perhaps never will until the day of reckoning arrives, and it is too late."

"Ah ! I now understand what you are at, Aunt Amie,"

said one of the young ladies, laughing. "After all, this is only one of your pretty little allegories. Well! they want me at the piano now, but I hope I shall find time to think of these things before pay day comes;" and she joined a gay group in another part of the room.

The other niece remained. Her aunt's simple illustration had made an impression on her mind which was never effaced: henceforth she read the Scriptures, and loved to converse with Aunt Amie on their contents, soon evincing by her life and conversation that her heart was under the influence of the truths she learned there.

Some months elapsed before Aunt Amie had an opportunity of again seeing William Kelly. Mr. N—— and his family had suddenly arranged a plan for passing the summer at a watering-place, whither she accompanied them. They did not return until autumn, and the day after their arrival she set out for Glaungrenan. The country no longer shone in the rich verdure of summer and the flowers which, when she went that way before, had adorned her path, were all gone. Neither were her own feelings so joyous, for circumstances of a depressing nature had occurred to her family. A dark autumnal cloud had gathered in the horizon, and to her fancy it seemed ominous of misfortunes too likely to befall those she loved best. As she gazed sadly on the black curtain which screened so much of the blue heavens from her view, a splendid rainbow appeared stretching across its gloom—the bow of promise; Amie's heart was cheered. "I was wrong," thought she, "to be

depressed by any prospect of coming ill : the Christian's eye may always discern a rainbow on the darkest cloud—the beautiful, the comforting emblem of God's rich mercy in the covenant of grace."

As fresh in yon horizon dark,
As young its beauties seem,
As when the eagle from the ark
First sported in its beam.

For faithful to its sacred page
Heaven still rebuilds that span :
Nor lets the type grow pale with age
That first spoke peace to man.

The rain, which the cloudy sky had portended, began to fall just as Miss N—— reached Kelly's cottage ; and as he had come in from his work to seek shelter, she found him seated, with his mother and sister, by the cheerful blaze of a turf fire. The restless anxious look which he had worn when last she saw him was gone, but though his expression was placid and contented, he still seemed thoughtful. The lady was, of course, hospitably welcomed ; the best chair placed for her before the fire, fragrant bog-wood heaped on to increase the blaze, and respectful inquiries made concerning her health and that of all the family at the *great house*. A pause followed, as if each was conscious that a difficult and unpleasant subject was about to be introduced. Miss N—— commenced it by saying, "I am told, William, that since I last saw you, you have professed the Protestant faith. The name and outward profession signify little : I hope you have Jesus for your Saviour, God for your Father, and his Holy Spirit, through the teaching of his written word, for your Guide."

"Yes, Miss Amie, I trust so," he replied. "I was a long time just like a poor frightened sheep that the wolf was pursuing; and when the Shepherd opened his arms to receive me, I would not run to Him, nor believe He could care for one like me. But I know Him now, ma'am; and I know his voice, and a stranger I will not follow. I can't say these things well in English, ma'am, but I know 'He is the good Shepherd that gave his life for the sheep.'"*

These were pleasant words to Amie. She said in a low voice, but from the depths of her heart, "'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.'† I have also heard," she continued, "that you have met with opposition because of your endeavours to follow the good Shepherd in the way his word directs, and have suffered much in consequence of doing so."

"Oh! not much, ma'am. Think of all He suffered for me!" replied Kelly.

"Not much!" interrupted his mother. "Do you call it not much that no neighbour is allowed to come near us, or speak to us, or buy from us, or work in our fields? or ——"

Her son requested her to stop, saying, that she was distressing Miss Amie by repeating these things.

Mrs. Kelly declared she would be the last person in the world to vex Miss Amie, or any of the family, and only told the tale of her griefs because she knew that lady was always ready to feel for the poor. Miss N——

* John x. 11.

† Rom. xv. 13.

encouraged her to proceed; and then learned that, owing to the persecution carried on against Kelly by the priests, the poor young man and his family were now reduced to such poverty that he had no resource but to pursue his former plan and emigrate. The old woman did not seem to blame her son for his apostasy so much as Miss N—— expected. A mother is not easily persuaded that her only son can do wrong; besides, it appeared that Mrs. Kelly had heard a good deal of the New Testament read in Irish, and was acute enough to contrast the violent language and conduct of the priest with the meekness and gentleness of Him who has “left us an example that we should follow his steps.”

During the fearful visitation of famine with which Ireland was afflicted, Mrs. Kelly, like thousands of the lower orders, had almost got rid of the prejudices against Protestants in which she had grown up, by witnessing the impartial benevolence of both clergy and laity in relieving the misery of the sufferers. She was often heard to say that the religion which taught people to act thus, could not be a *very bad* religion. During that dismal time, she and her family had particularly experienced the kindness of their landlord, Mr. N——, and were enabled to keep their cabin, and a couple of fields which they rented from him, when thousands were turned out homeless and helpless upon the world. But now, while the country was still impoverished, so that it was difficult, under any circumstances, to earn a livelihood, the interdictions of the priests to their flocks against having any dealing, or holding any intercourse with Kelly, destroyed every hope of his gaining a subsistence; and, worse still,

those who had always helped in time of need,—their kind landlord and his family,—were, it was to be feared, no longer able to do so.

Reports had gone abroad that, according to the popular phrase, the master was *feeling the times*. It was even whispered that the sad history of so many other old and respectable Irish families would soon be told of the N——s, and their property appear in the list of encumbered estates. With that tact and delicacy of feeling for which the Irish are so remarkable, this subject was not alluded to by Mrs. Kelly in telling the story of her own distress; but Miss N—— could perceive that she knew and deeply felt it. When, in conclusion, she said, “So you see, Miss Amie, there is no help for it. My boy, my poor Billy, must go over the salt seas away from me!”

Miss N—— replied, “I fear so, Mrs. Kelly: there is no help, no human help to be looked for. *We* can no longer offer you any, and probably must ourselves soon leave our happy home—the place where our fathers have been for so many generations—the kind-hearted people, who——” Her voice faltered; and Mrs. Kelly burst into tears, exclaiming—

“Then it is true!—it is true!” At which she and her daughter broke forth into loud lamentations. William, with tears streaming down his face, walked to the door, and stood, looking out, while poor Amelia was too much overpowered to refrain from weeping. When the violence of their grief subsided, the old woman sat, silently rocking herself on her chair; her daughter, who had not spoken before, came near the lady, and said—

"Forgive me, Miss Amie; forgive me! I felt very angry with you because you had a hand in turning William; but I ought not to have been angry with so good a lady, and one of the family, and she in trouble too—Ohone!"

"I have nothing to forgive, Mary," kindly replied Miss N——; "and I trust the time will come when you will rejoice that your brother has had courage to obey God rather than man. Meantime, I believe the plan of emigrating to America is the best we can devise. I wish, William, that I could undertake the care of your mother and sister until you send for them. All I can promise is, that while the property remains in my brother's possession—and that will not be long—they will have their cottage for a home, and my nieces and I will try to get purchasers for Mary's fancy-knitting, and assist them in every way that is still in our power."

Mrs. Kelly continued rocking herself, and seemed almost stupefied by the double grief of her son's intended departure, and the ruin of her master and family. Her daughter vented her feelings in words.

"Why need William go, Miss Amie? can't he be as good and as religious as you like, and be a Roman Catholic still? Why need he give up the religion of his fathers; it was good enough for them, and why not for him? Then, if he would only go back to Mass, he could marry Kate Dillon, the best little girl in the parish, and the richest. And though her father would never agree to it before, the priest says he *must* and *shall* give her to him at once if he will only give up his new-fashioned ways, and burn the Bible in the presence of his reverence."

By the suffering which poor Kelly's countenance expressed when Kate Dillon was mentioned, Miss N—— discovered that the giving up of Popery cost him even a greater sacrifice than she had apprehended; but at the conclusion of Mary's speech he started up and exclaimed,—

“Burn the Bible!—Burn the word of the great God, that tells us how He loved me, and gave his Son to die for me! Oh! Mary, dear, let me never hear you say such a thing again. Listen to what the Lord said, Mary.” And he repeated these words in Irish: “He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.—And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”*

Truly as Miss N—— sympathized in the trials of this poor family, her heart was filled with joy and gratitude to Him who had led this wanderer from error and darkness into the way of life; and was, as she hoped, giving him strength to walk therein, though it seemed to be a thorny path.

Kelly requested that, when he was gone, she would often visit his mother, to whom he was fondly attached, and read the Scriptures for her, imperfectly as she understood them in English. The Irish reader was to let her hear them in her own language whenever he came that way, and she had promised to listen attentively for her beloved son's sake.

The rain had now ceased, and Amie returned home, her frame of mind during her solitary walk fully realizing the apostle's words—“We are troubled on every

* Matt. x. 37, 38.

side, yet not distressed ; we are perplexed, but not in despair ; cast down, but not destroyed ; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing."

The next time that Miss N—— visited "The Sunny Valley" it did not appear to have retained, either literally or figuratively, the slightest pretensions to that cheerful appellation. Winter had set in, shrouding the landscape in gloom, and William Kelly was gone. His poor mother, seated by her lonely hearth, looked sad and comfortless ; she could speak of nothing but of her dear boy, nor look with hope to anything except the prospect of joining him "beyond seas," as she expressed it, when he sent money to bear her expenses. She was grateful to Amelia for some little presents which she took her, and for all her kindness, but she never smiled except when talking of her voyage to America ; so true it is that "where the treasure is there will the heart be also." Mary said very little, and when Miss N—— endeavoured to lead the mother's mind to that Saviour whom her son had taken for his portion, she left the room.

Such was the state of things whenever Aunt Amie visited the cottage in Glaungrenan during the winter. One letter, announcing his safe arrival, had been received from William, but it was too soon to look for the remittance which was to be the means of re-uniting the family again.

The Irish reader visited the mother of his absent friend occasionally ; and Miss N—— had, at length, the gratification of perceiving that Mrs. Kelly spoke of these visits as if she enjoyed them. She now often referred to passages of Scripture, assuring Miss Amie that she could have no idea how beautiful they were in

Irish. One remark which she made gave great pleasure to the benevolent mind of that lady. She said that when listening to an account of all that the Lord Jesus did—how kind He was to the poor—how ready to forgive—but, above all, how much He suffered for sinners,—she could no longer wonder that her dear boy loved Him, and was ready to give up country, and mother, and even poor Kate Dillon, sooner than part with the book which told all about Him.

The hope excited by these words in a mind quite capable of sharing that holy and heavenly joy which the angels themselves feel at the conversion of a sinner, was often most soothing to Miss N—— at a season when she needed comfort.

The trials, for some time apprehended, had now befallen herself and her family. Painful scenes, but now, alas! of common occurrence in poor devoted Ireland, were gone through. The establishment at N—— House was broken up. An auction followed. Then, to the inexpressible grief of the tenantry, the property was about to pass into other hands. Mr. N—— had been invited by a rich relative, settled at New York, to take his family there, with a hope that he might provide for them in a way which no exertions could effect at home. He lost no time in embarking with his daughters, leaving his son and his sister Amelia to follow, when they had arranged some business at N—— previous to leaving it for ever. We do not touch upon the mournful scene of their departure from the home of their fathers, followed some miles of the road by a weeping crowd of the warm-hearted people, who had long looked up to them as protectors and

friends, but to mention that the value and reality of the Christian principle, which looks for happiness beyond the changing scenes of earth, was manifested on this occasion by the young lady we have before alluded to, whom Aunt Amie had been the means of leading to a knowledge of the gospel. Although her heart ached at saying farewell to the friends and home of her childhood—though deeply sympathising in the sorrow of all around her—she was calm while the others were quite overcome.

“Oh! how do you bear it so well?” said her weeping sister.

“Dear sister,” she replied, “it is because I have for some time borne in mind, that *here we have no continuing city*, and endeavoured to *seek one to come*.” *

As it was to New York that William Kelly had gone, many were the messages sent to him, by the N—— family, from his mother and others. He had been apprised by letter of the probability there was, that he would soon see *the master* and the young ladies in the land of strangers. After their departure, Amelia continued her visits to Mrs. Kelly, notwithstanding the employment which preparations to follow involved her in. One day on arriving at the cottage, she found that the long-expected summons to join William in America had reached his mother and sister. He was doing well, and desired that in a month from the time of their receiving the letter, they would go to Cork, where a friend of his was to make arrangements for their sailing. The voice of joy was once more heard in this lowly dwelling. Mrs. Kelly bustled about with the

* Heb. xiii. 14.

agility of youth, talking of soon seeing her William's smiling face, and already making preparations for her departure. Mary was equally happy, and the only shade they seemed to perceive over the prospect was indicated by an occasional exclamation of—"Oh! if Kate Dillon were but coming with us."

The month passed away, the Kellies were intending to depart, and Miss N—— was just setting out on her last walk to Glaungrenan to bid them farewell, when she also received an American letter. It came from the niece to whom she was most attached, who was also a sister in the faith of the gospel, and brought the welcome news of her family having arrived safely at New York. But it also contained tidings that greatly shocked Aunt Amie. "What shall I do? How can I ever break these tidings?" she exclaimed. It was indeed a hard task, but the duty seemed imperative, and with an aching heart she commenced the *last* walk to Glaungrenan. "How strange, how mysterious are the ways of God!" she thought as she went along. But the Saviour's words, "*What I do ye know not now, but ye shall know hereafter,*" occurred to her mind, and gave her much composure. "Yes; He doeth all things well, though I cannot yet see how." She drew near the cottage, expecting yet dreading to see Mrs. Kelly come forth, her face beaming with joy at the prospect of soon meeting her son—but all was still.

She entered, and saw the Irish reader seated near the fire, and Mary Kelly standing leaning over it, watching a small saucepan in which she appeared to be warming something; her eyes were red with weeping. On seeing Miss N——, she exclaimed—

“Oh, Miss Amie! my mother! my poor mother!”

The cause of her grief was soon explained: Mrs. Kelly lay on her death-bed, and was, apparently, very near her departure; her feeble frame had suffered from excitement of feeling, first occasioned by grief at parting from her son, and then joy at the thought of soon seeing him again; and this, with agitation attending preparations for the journey, had brought on feverish symptoms, which had been suddenly increased by an occurrence which she felt very much. Kate Dillon's parents had, by the advice of the priest, forced their daughter to marry a man in the neighbourhood, fearing that if she outlived her father she would join the Kellies in America, and bestow her fortune on the apostate William. To effect this marriage the priest had used his threats, and the poor girl had yielded under the influence of superstitious fears. Mrs. Kelly, who was attached to Kate, and knew how much the news of her marriage would afflict her son, was attacked with violent illness immediately after she heard it. The fever had now left her, but in a state of weakness from which there was no hope of her restoration.

“And the worst of all is,” said Kate, “she will not hear of our sending for the priest, but she never tires of this man and his book, and says, that all we want to know is there.”

Mary went to her mother with the drink which she had been preparing, saying, she would tell her that Miss Amie was come. When she left the room, Miss N—— learned from the Irish reader that the dying woman had surprised him by the clear knowledge of gospel truths she had acquired, and the perfect tran-

quillity with which faith in these truths enabled her to meet the approach of death. Amelia, whose mind was so overpowered by all she had heard that morning, that she had, hitherto, scarcely spoken, now inquired whether Mrs. Kelly seemed uneasy or anxious on any subject? The reader replied, on one only. She expressed herself satisfied and happy, that instead of going to her dear son, she was going to One who had loved her better and done more for her than any son could do ; but still it grieved her to think of all William would suffer when he heard of her death, and of Kate's marriage. This last event she feared would break his heart. For Mary, her prayer was that she might be spared till *God taught her his true religion* out of the Bible ; but she had repeatedly said she wished her beloved William was safe and happy with his Lord, as she would shortly be.

"Strange indeed !" said Miss N——. "Truly God's ways are not as our ways."

Mary now summoned Amelia and the reader to her mother's bedside. The dying woman was able to say but little ; however, that little was sufficient to confirm the hope which the reader's account had awakened in her mind, that this poor woman had been called in the eleventh hour to a knowledge of Him, whom to know is life. Her last request to Amelia was—"Be kind to Mary, and let her go in the ship with you, and read the Bible to her, Miss Amie, till she gets to William. My poor boy ! oh ! how all the news will grieve him ; I have no trouble but the thought of that."

"Do not be troubled by that thought any longer, Mrs. Kelly," said Miss N——. "William is where no

grief can reach him. The righteous is taken away from the evil to come."

The reader started—Mary looked puzzled; but Mrs. Kelly understood her at once, and said, with perfect calmness—

"Is William gone before me? Then I die quite happy."

Her voice failed, and though she continued to breathe for about half an hour, she did not speak or move again. Miss N—— and the reader returned to their seats at the fire-side, and when all was over, Mary joined them. She seemed almost bewildered by sorrow. When she fully understood that her brother was no more, she exclaimed,

"Then I am all alone in the world! Oh! Miss Amie, wont you let me go with you, and won't you read *the book* to me, and teach me the blessed things that made my mother and William so happy?"

The Irish reader requesting to hear the particulars of his friend's death, Miss N—— read for him the following paragraph from her niece's letter.

"After the account I have given of our prosperous voyage and safe arrival, which doubtless has occasioned you feelings of thankfulness, I am sorry indeed to relate what will give my dear Aunt Amie much pain to hear. You are aware that poor William Kelly was expecting us at New York. On board one of the first boats that crowded round the ship when we cast anchor, we recognised his fine animated face, radiant with delight when he saw us standing on the deck. He immediately made an effort to spring up the ship's side. The boat moved—and, alas! he was precipitated

into the water. We saw him go down—every exertion was made to save him, but he never rose again. You will have the melancholy task of communicating this event to his poor mother and sister. Oh! that the bitter grief it will cause may be the means of bringing them to Him whom William loved and served, so that they may yet say—*It is good for me that I have been afflicted.* We have, since landing, met with an Irish gentleman, a devoted Christian, whose chief object in visiting this country was to read the word of God to Irish immigrants in their own language. He came in the ship which brought your poor *protégé*, and gave us a most pleasing account of the consistency of that poor young man's conduct with his religious profession upon several trying occasions. I have not time now to repeat it, nor to write any more, except to transcribe what our new acquaintance calls a *very tame* translation, which he has made of a little Irish song composed by William Kelly during their voyage.

‘ THE IRISH EMIGRANT’S SONG.

- ‘ Swiftly over the white sea foam,
 Our vessel bears a weeping band
 Of Exiles from their native home
 To a distant and a happier land.
 We hear from many a hollow cave,
 While passing the rocky shore along,
 The mingled voice of wind and wave,
 And it seems like the Banshee’s farewell song.
- ‘ O land of sorrow, and land of sin !
 Yet loveliest spot of all the earth ;
 Our swelling hearts would burst within,
 In leaving thee thus, our place of birth !

But bearing on to another scene,
Where griefs like thine are all unknown ;
We heed not the dreary way between,
With hope's bright star to guide us on.

' And is not our voyage of life like this ?
We are leaving all, by time endear'd :
But looking towards scenes of future bliss,
The sorrowful, weary way is cheer'd.
Then bear away o'er the salt sea foam,
Lightly before the favouring wind :
With hearts fixed on the distant home,
Cast not one lingering look behind.' "

THE OLD HOUSEHOLD CLOCK.

THE household clock, with dial dim,
Still marks the flight of time,
Speaks with a silvery voice each hour,
And rings its merry chime.
More than a hundred years have pass'd
Since first its race began ;
Yet still it moves with measured step,
A monitor to man.

How many forms that sleep in dust
Have view'd, with thoughtless gaze,
Those circling hours in their swift course
That measured out their days !
The bright-eyed boy, the aged sire,
The maid, the matron grey,
Alike have look'd upon its face,
And then have pass'd away.

A thousand mem'ries thrill my soul,
As on my ravish'd ear
Rings the gay chime, in early years
I loved so much to hear.
A father, mother, sisters dear,
And joyous brothers too,
Smiled round me in those happy days,
When life and hopes were new.

But they have pass'd away from earth,
Their voices greet no more ;
No more their smiles and fond embrace
Shall welcome as of yore.
Yet there, unchanged by fleeting time,
Unmoved by grief or joy,
Still ticks the clock as soberly
As when I was a boy.

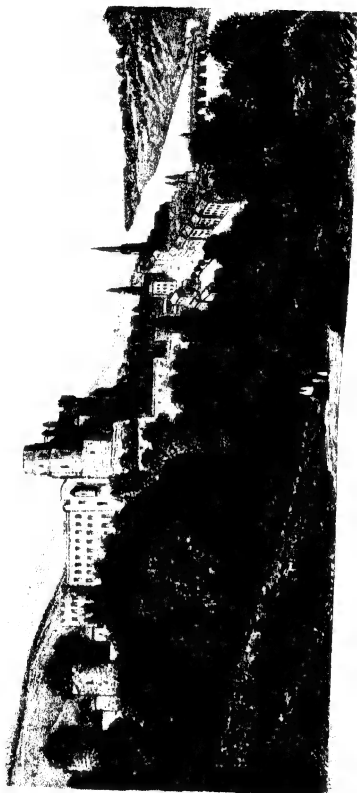
And still its circling hands shall move,
The passing hour shall sound,
When those who daily view it now
Are slumbering in the ground.
For other eyes, for other ears,
'Twill note the flight of time ;
Midst scenes of gladness and of tears,
It merrily shall chime.

Swift as a mighty river's tide,
Our days and years sweep by,
And time for us will soon be lost
In vast eternity.
Oh, then, that we might hear aright
The voices of the hours !
Improve to-day, while yet it lasts,—
To-morrow is not ours.

HEIDELBERG.

THE situation of Heidelberg, on the banks of the Neckar, is one of the most beautiful and romantic in Europe. It never can fail to excite the admiration of the traveller who visits it under those favourable circumstances, in point of weather, health, and spirits, which are always and everywhere the necessary conditions for our enjoyment of what is fair, picturesque, and sublime, either in art or in nature. The valley, with its lofty, sloping hills, so well wooded from base to crown; the river, spotted with boats, and barges, and timber rafts, like little floating towns; the grey stone bridge striding over the stream; the houses and churches clustering down to the water's edge, on the right bank looking westward; and the brave old Castle of red sandstone, with its elaborate front, seeming in ruins very palace-like, as it stands on the hill at the back of the town with a lordly air, in fine artistic relief upon a background of rich woodland: these are together elements of a picture such as rarely meets the eye of the tourist, however wide may be the range of his travels.

The town itself is interesting from the aspect of antiquity it wears, from the connexion with a large university, whose students are seen grouped about the



streets, and especially from its historical associations. The churches and other public buildings cannot boast of much in the way of architecture, but there is at least one specimen of the domestic class worth looking at: it is a house of three stories, which stands in the main street. It has a rich façade adorned with sculptures, medallions, and gilded busts, very characteristic of the florid style of building at the end of the sixteenth century, to which it belongs, for it bears the date of 1595. When one knows the history of that quaint and curious dwelling, the interest produced by looking at it is considerably enhanced. It has survived the repeated sieges which desolated the town. During the thirty years' war, Heidelberg was taken and sacked, but this house appears to have escaped uninjured. Again, in 1689, the French general burned the place, but this house remained inviolate. Once more, in 1693, the soldiers of Louis XIV. made a still more furious assault upon the town, which had scarcely begun to rise out of its former ashes; but when the smoke which enveloped this scene of brutal warfare passed away, there still stood this solitary house, as it were, in the midst of a heap of cinders.

The lack of architecture in the churches is supplied by incidents in history; for as to that of St. Peter, the oldest in the town, Jerome of Prague fastened on its door his famous theses, and preached what were the doctrines of the Reformation to crowds in the churchyard; and there, too, rests the body of Olympia Morata, who was driven out of Italy as a heretic, and settled in the town as a lecturer—her beauty, genius, learning, and eloquence, gathering around her large and admiring

audiences. She seems to have been the Hypatia of Heidelberg.*

In connexion with the town, and especially the castle, one also thinks of Luther, who is said to have come here after the famous Diet of Worms; and still, at a short distance from the town, an old house is shown where tradition reports that he alighted—and well do we remember late one evening traversing the ground, and musing much, as we rode along, upon that great man's destiny. A stream of moonlight, as it burst from behind dense clouds to illuminate partially the scene before us, formed, we thought, no inappropriate type of his mission and influence.

But the Castle is the grand point of attraction at Heidelberg. It was a brilliant day when we scaled the summit of the hill on which it stands; and the impression it made upon us as we looked at it from below, has been somewhat revived since, on passing through the lower park at Windsor. Not that Windsor Castle, in its form and architecture, resembles Heidelberg, or that the prospect from the one is like the prospect from the other; but there is some similarity of position between the two, especially as regards their lordly elevation on a platform, above green woods and gardens, in the near vicinity of an old rambling town. We went winding up the pathway and the steps, till we reached the carriage-road; and passing under trees, whose shade was very refreshing, came upon a gateway of the seventeenth century, which was peering out most pleasantly among the foliage around it. The gate in

* Hypatia was a celebrated female philosopher in Alexandria, in the fifth century.

itself is picturesque; but when told that it was built by the prince palatine Frederick v. in honour of his marriage with Elizabeth, the daughter of our James I., it brought up affecting reminiscences of the fate of that poor proud woman, who was the martyr to her own ambition and her father's neglect. The adjoining flower-garden, too, was laid out for her,—and we thought, as we looked at it, of the joy she would feel as she came here, the bride of the Elector, and saw the splendour of her truly regal home; and then of the anguish of her heart, when she found that her dreams of a crown had for ever melted away, and that her husband's princely castle had fallen into the hands of foes. Frederick, after being for a little while nominally king of Bohemia, to which dignity he was raised by the Protestant portion of the state, found himself too weak to maintain his standing, and was deserted by those from whom he expected assistance, especially his father-in-law, who, with characteristic cunning and heartlessness, first deceived and then forsook him. It is said that through Elizabeth's solicitations the Elector was chiefly induced to accept the offer of the fatal gift, and that she exclaimed, "Let me rather eat dry bread at a King's table, than feast at the board of an Elector." She had her wish; for, as Mrs. Jamieson remarks, "she and her family lived to eat dry bread, ay, and to beg it before they ate it—but she would be a queen."

Walking past the gate, we come at length upon a noble old entrance of the fourteenth century still armed with a portcullis, and not far off we see a tower blown up by gunpowder, lying beside its original site, a most enormous mass of ruin. Entering the gateway

there is a hill overarched by columns on the right side, and the ancient buildings of Rupert on the other. The court-yard is noble in the extreme, the buildings to the right belonging to the sixteenth century, and being of the finest kind of Italian architecture. One may sit long on a sunny afternoon, and examine the beautiful sculptures, and picture the gay scenes of revelry which used to be enacted in this spacious court, when the sculptures were fresher than they are now, and eyes closed for centuries used to sparkle as they looked at them; the shades of Frederick and his bride, and their retinue of nobles (for, at the time of their marriage, the court of the Elector was one of the most brilliant in Europe) came passing before us, and then seemed to vanish within the entrance hall, as we sat dreaming there of other days. The oldest part of the castle is on the right side. We entered and passed through roofless ruins, and some dismantled apartments which are still preserved, lingering for some time by the windows of that portion of the palace which was built by Frederick for his English wife.

Coming out upon the platform behind the buildings erected by Frederick, we had a glorious view of the Neckar, the opposite hills, and the scene which spreads far away at the end of the valley to the east. It is just the place in which to reflect on the works of God and the history of men, on the everlasting hills, and the ephemeral mortals who build their dwellings on them. While that pure bright river has been rolling on, while that blue sky, now all sunlit, has been overarching this panorama of beauty and glory, summer after summer,—what changes, passions, conflicts, boisterous

joys, heart-breaking agonies, base intrigues, and disastrous defeats, have these old red crumbling walls seen over and over again! All is silent now in the deserted halls. Two or three people only have here a few habitable rooms, where once warders kept watch, and soldiers drew up in proud array, and nobles were lodged, and kings paid visits, and all was bustle, pomp, earnestness, and excitement!

In the cellar of the castle we were shown the famous tun, the largest wine-cask in the world, capable of containing 800 hogsheads. It was constructed in 1751, and, the guide says, was twice emptied in the reign of one of the masters of the house. It was the practice to dance on the platform round this enormous vessel, when it was filled with the fruit of the vintage, a ceremony which has not taken place these eighty years. The sight of this tun awakens thoughts of the merry-makings in the castle, and brings out pictures of the groups around the hearth on some winter's night, when the wind came howling down the valley, rocking the battlements and towers of the fortress; and an old servant of the house, perhaps, would sit and tell the listeners of the fortunes of the family, or perchance relate some fairy tales, or other idle superstitions, with which this part of Germany once abounded.

The gardens and shrubberies are still very beautiful, and offer attractive walks; and what a view is gained of the castle, the valley, and the open country beyond, as a person sits on the terrace to the east! That is the place, too, in which to revolve the history of the palace and its princely lords. Its foundations were laid as early as the year 1300. On the 26th June, 1764,

while it was held by Charles Theodore, after much of it had been restored to its original splendour and magnificence, it was struck with lightning and consumed, and thus in an instant, from natural causes, was overthrown the edifice which had stood through the storms and battles of nearly five centuries. It is a curious coincidence, that the ancient palace built on the Geissberg, and turned by Frederick II. into a powder magazine, was similarly destroyed.

The rides and walks about Heidelberg are exceedingly beautiful—the castle, from almost every point of view, forming a very prominent object. Rambling along the banks of the river, you see it like a stately shadow of the past, keeping watch over the whole scenery of present times and things, buildings and people, costumes and customs, which make a long succession of charming pictures, revealing themselves at every step. On the old bridge, too, views are caught full of picturesque details: the town spreading out on the one side, and stretching far away—for it is a long straggling street—about three miles; the valley of the Neckar, with its rich swelling surface of woods carrying the eye onward through its winding depths, on the other. But what delighted us most of all, was a ramble among the thick trees, that clothe the hill opposite the castle, near a spot which has acquired a famous notoriety, from its being the place where the mad-brained students of the university fight duels occasionally, even four or five times in a day. We went mounting higher and higher, one bright morning, among those leafy solitudes, when all was silent, save the murmuring streams which trickled beside the path, and the merry birds carolling over head;

and then, turning round to look through an opening in the dense wood, we saw on the other side the river the dark stone castle, whose red and almost roseate hue in the morning sun gave it the aspect of some enchanted palace, as it seemed to hang there over the gardens, and among the vineyards and forests which covered the sides of the opposite mountain. There are views sometimes caught which imprint themselves on the imagination for life, and oft recur in hours of solitude and pensiveness, soothing with their beauty. The Castle of Heidelberg, as seen that day, was one of these.

THE BLIGHTED FLOWER.

A WALK in a shady lane, the shelter of the graceful branches of a wayside avenue of ages' growth and grandeur, the fragrance of the wild herb, and the beauty of the hedge-flower, how pleasant to the eyes, and welcome to all the senses of young and old, who spend their lives "in populous cities pent!" At least, so thought Willy Jermyn and his mother, as they strolled along such a lane one summer evening. Willy was in the height of youthful enjoyment, gathering flowers for his mother's pleasure, and mounting the highest bar of every gate or stile for his own, to survey from the most commanding point of observation the prospect beyond.

At last a very lofty pair of iron gates defied this aspiring propensity, and Willy was constrained to press his rosy face against its perpendicular compartments, to obtain a clear idea of whither wended the well-kept drive to which it gave admission.

"Just let me look inside, mamma; I cannot see any house from here," said he, as he pushed open one of the gates, and lightly stepped within.

"Willy, Willy," cried his mother, "you must not go there! It is a private road, and leads to some gentleman's house."

"Only a peep," said the boy, going quickly on, and then running back to beg that she would come also;

"only just one peep."

"Such a beautiful house! Such a terrace covered with beautiful flowers!—windows down to the ground too. Do come and look. Oh, how I wish we had a place like this, instead of living in a street!"

"We must be content to live where God in his providence places us, dear Willy. If we lived so far from town, think what a walk you would have to school every day."

"Walk!" replied Willy, with an air of contempt. "I would not walk. I would have a pony and ride, and you should have a carriage; we would never walk at all. Oh, how happy we should be!"

"I do not think it would make me happy not to walk at all," said Mrs. Jermyn, smiling. "But, Willy, come back. I hear the sound of wheels, and we are surely trespassing."

Willy hastily followed his mother back to the gates, which had been thrown open by a footman to admit a handsome carriage, and who angrily demanded what he was doing there.

Willy made no reply, being intent upon the contents of the carriage, and obtained a glimpse of a gentleman within it, apparently half asleep. The carriage rolled on, the gates were closed, and Willy again skipped gaily by his mother's side.

"How stupid that gentleman looked, mamma! He does not seem to care much about his pretty house and his comfortable carriage."

"They are probably as much matters of course to him, as a street and a walk to you and me, Willy."

"Well, when I am a man, and rich, I will have a house like that, or prettier; and if I see a boy wishing

to look at it, and admiring my fine gardens, I will invite him in to look about him, and not let my footman frighten him away. And you shall ride in a carriage some day. Let me see; he has only two horses—you shall have four; white, with long tails, they shall be. You may laugh, mamma; but you shall see; I say I will have it so." And Willy stamped his foot, and plunged the end of his mother's parasol into a dusty rut, with an air of strong determination.

Mrs. Jermyn gazed fondly on the bright face of the energetic young speaker, and thought it was just possible that some of his childish fancies might be realized; for his resolute mind, and steady perseverance, already promised success in whatever pursuit he might select for their future development.

Many years after the occurrence of that little incident, a family party paid a visit of inspection to a superb mansion which had nearly reached the point of completion, in preparation for their future residence. The site was in good taste, the gardens and conservatories were luxuriant, the internal decorations were faultless, and the survey gave evident satisfaction to the wealthy proprietor of the whole.

"Well, Charley, will it do?" said he, laying his hand upon the shoulder of a fine youth, who appeared to share his father's gratification.

"I think so indeed, sir," replied the youth; "and Blanche is delighted with everything; but she has been wondering whether we shall live to see those young trees which you made us each plant, grow up to overshadow us."

"Blanche is a silly child. Tell her the trees will grow faster than any of their young planters." And passing on, he approached a rustic bench on the lawn, where an elderly lady of the party had sat down to rest, and seemed absorbed in her own meditations. "Well, grandmamma," said he, playfully, "what shall I give you for your thoughts?"

"They are not always so well worth telling," replied the old lady, with a smile. "I had suddenly retraced in imagination some nearly forty years of life, and beheld you peeping through a gate, resembling the one by which we entered, and coveting your neighbour's house."

"Was I so naughty, my dear mother? Of course you punished me," said Mr. Jermyn, laughing.

"I dreamed not that your young ambition would receive such ample gratification, William. You have prospered in every earthly undertaking."

"That is true, and instead of continuing to covet, I am about to turn that branch of business over to the boys, and purpose now to enjoy the full reward of past exertions. And seriously let me ask, dear mother, is there any promise of my childhood yet unfulfilled to you? You sometimes speak as if you were not quite satisfied with me, after all. But, be assured, I only need the knowledge of your wishes in order to fulfil them."

"My dear boy,"—the old lady still loved to call him her boy, though the glossy hair she used to part on his forehead was now streaked with white, and his stately figure had lost the elasticity of youth—

"My dear boy, God has given us other commands besides the fifth, and while you disregard them, the

dearest wish and prayer of my life remains unanswered ; and riches cannot purchase, though they may retard its gratification,—yes, and even hinder it,” she added, with a gentle sigh.

“ You take such melancholy views of everything, dear mother. Are not all the good things that I possess given me to enjoy while I have them ? And that enjoyment consists in making those I love happy with them.”

“ Their true use and value cannot be appreciated, dear William, until the God of heaven has added the blessing that maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow. You do not covet that blessing, you do not strive for that unmixed happiness, and are content to live without Him in the world. My son, the love, the hope, the ambition of a Christian parent, stretch into eternity ; and though all the world lay at the feet of her child, it is nothing if the seal of God’s adoption be not set upon his heart. What will it profit you or me to share your wealth with me on earth, and refuse me thy soul for companionship in heaven ?”

“ Well, dear mother, all in good time. You are privileged to speak your mind to me ; but I must request that you will not instil your very peculiar views into the minds of my children. It might have a serious effect upon Blanche, who already troubles me with fancies wholly unnatural for a child.”

“ But Blanche is not a strong child, dear William, and those fancies are not unnatural for an invalid. Blanche has no earthly care, nor seems likely to know any that the love of friends can avert ; and if she feel any about a future state, would it not be wise to

grapple with her difficulties, to soothe her fears, and animate her hopes with the full provision of Divine Love for all her spiritual need? If she were called away young, she needs a Saviour; and if she lives to be as old as I am, she needs the same Saviour; and the love that alone can cheer the heart on its short journey to an early grave, can also brighten every blessing, and consecrate every enjoyment through a long and happy life."

"You distress me, mother," said Mr. Jermyn with evident emotion. "Surely my precious Blanche is not ill. It is the thought of your gloomy fancy, and I will not indulge it for an instant. Blanche, Blanche, the loveliest of my flowers, the dearest of my treasures! what would be this place to me, if she were not here to enjoy its beauties?" And he rose hastily to search for his daughter, and assure himself of her health and happiness. Scarcely was he out of sight, when forth from one of the low open windows stepped a young girl. She bounded over the lawn, and took the seat by the old lady's side.

"Dear grandmamma, is it not a lovely place? Shall we not be very happy here?" she exclaimed.

"I hope so, my love. You will if ——" The old lady paused. She was thinking of her son's request.

"If what, grandmamma? If we are good, do you mean?" she added laughing; "as my lesson says, 'The man is happy because he is good.'"

"As God's word says, dear Blanche, if you give Him your heart, and acknowledge Him in all your ways, desiring to count all things but loss in comparison with the excellency of the knowledge of his Christ."

"I should like to know more about Him," said Blanche musingly. "I have been thinking what a strange thing it is that all these beautiful things which papa has made for our enjoyment will last so much longer than we shall, for whose pleasure they were made. The house may be re-decorated, and with new stucco and paint will look as well fifty years hence as now. The trees and flowers will be more luxuriant than ever, if they are taken care of; but we who look at them and admire them, though we have sense and they have none, must come to an end soon. No stucco, no pruning, can keep us in order."

"To an end, dear Blanche?"

"Well, I mean we must die, we must wither like this pretty flower that I gathered so thoughtlessly. I wish I had let it grow. It makes me sad to see it dying so soon."

"There is a seed in that flower, my child, which, if it had been suffered to ripen and fall into the ground, would strike, and grow, and bloom again next year, perhaps more lovely than it was just now. It is so with us, we wither and die, some early, some late, and are hidden for awhile; but though sown in corruption, we may be raised in incorruption, though sown in dishonour, we may be raised in glory; and as we have borne the image of the earthy, so may we also bear the image of the heavenly."

"You say we *may*, grandmamma; is it not then certain that we *must*?"

"There is a resurrection to everlasting glory, and one also to everlasting shame and contempt," said Mrs. Jermyn softly. "The wise, who seek wisdom at

God's word and throne, the little flock who love, and believe, and follow the true Shepherd, the humble child who asks and receives the Holy Spirit,—these are the blessed, who may look forward to enjoy an inheritance which cannot pass away, and a home where the truest of friends has provided, in luxury untold, for the happiness of his dear children."

"If I could learn all about that, I should not want to keep our beautiful house here for ever," said Blanche; "but I always want to know what comes next. I like to have something that I cannot lose, and to look at something that cannot be spoiled."

"Earth does not supply that want, Blanche; you must look higher. 'Passing away,' is written on everything that the breath of sin has tainted with the curse. But there is a beauty that cannot fade; it is Christ's, and He gives it. There is life that cannot die; it is in Christ, and He bestows it. There is peace that cannot be broken; it is in Christ also, and He breathes it into the soul that trusts Him. He has all power in heaven and earth, and in Him dwell all gifts for those who seek to have them. Can you trust Him? can you ask Him dearest child? He bought them for us with his own blood; He loves to give what cost Him such a price."

"Grandmamma!" exclaimed Blanche, in the midst of an earnest gaze into the face that beamed with holy peace and pleasure, "I have changed my mind all at once about growing old. You do not need to be painted like the house. You look so happy and beautiful while you speak of that dear Saviour, that I love to look at you. I would not spare one white hair, nor have any other bloom on your cheek, or light in your eyes. Oh,

grandmamma, you look as if your trust were in some yet unseen reality that I long for, but have not found."

Mrs. Jermyn was surprised,—but oh, how she rejoiced to unfold to the young spirit the plans of peace and pardon and blessedness exhibited in the love of God, the life and death of Jesus, and the mission of the Comforter, for fallen guilty sinners.

Mr. Jermyn was a little annoyed, after his search for Blanche, to find her in earnest conversation with his mother, and intimated to his wife, on their return home, the propriety of guarding their ardent susceptible child from the influence of those "peculiar and melancholy" views, which in a dear old lady on the verge of the grave were doubtless very proper and natural, but wholly unsuitable to a young heiress, whose path was strewn with every pleasure that affection could devise and wealth procure.

"Mamma," said Blanche, "our house is really perfect. Papa has forgotten nothing that you can wish for, and I only want him to do one thing more."

"What is that, darling?" asked Mr. Jermyn.

"To insure that we shall all stay there well and happy, as long as we like," she replied.

"I know of nothing to prevent that, Blanche. If you take proper care of yourself you will be well, and if you accept the efforts made to secure your happiness, you cannot fail to be happy; and with health, wealth, and pleasant society, what more can be wanting?"

"To keep them, to know that we may keep them always. Can you do that for me, papa?"

Mr. Jermyn was puzzled for a moment, but quickly replied: "My dear Blanche, we are not required to

anticipate trouble ; you have much present happiness, enjoy it while you can."

"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," thought Blanche ; "how I wish papa would teach me something better !"

The removal took place, and ere the first visit to her son's mansion could be paid, the elder Mrs. Jermyn was summoned suddenly to her eternal home, and her sorrowing family followed her remains to the house prepared for all living.

Mounted on a beautiful little pony, Blanche daily rode with her father to town, enjoying the pure morning air ; and as the soft bloom occasioned by the favourite exercise spread over her cheek, he flattered himself that her constitution was strengthening, and looked forward with pleasure to the time when she might grace the circle of rank and fashion to which she would be introduced, and command the homage which beauty and wealth were ever known to secure.

But after a little time the ride was declined ; Blanche was weary ere returning home, and her drooping form and wavering step gave warning of approaching illness.

The first medical skill was anxiously summoned, and spinal disease with tendency to consumption was pronounced to be developed to a dangerous extent ; but hope was given of arresting both, if the physical discipline of the young patient were strictly enforced.

"My pretty pony !" said Blanche. "I must not ride any more with you, papa."

"Not at present, dearest ; but when you are well again you may."

"But shall I be well again? I know by your looks and dear mamma's, that you have not told me all," and in order to soothe what were supposed to be her apprehensions of death, her mother at last tenderly conveyed to her mind their fears that some deformity might remain, even after her health was in a measure restored.

"I would rather die," said Blanche, greatly shocked at this unexpected news. "Oh, how I wish dear grand-mamma were here now!"

"What could she do for you, dear Blanche, that we cannot do?" asked her father.

"She would teach me how to be patient and submissive," replied Blanche, sadly.

Mr. Jermyn rose and left the room, bitterly pained that his idolized child should forget all his efforts for her happiness, in a desire for those of the one person from whose influence he had endeavoured to guard her. But Mrs. Jermyn knew better, and now prepared to meet her daughter's need with unexpected efficiency.

"My Blanche," she said, as she sat by the couch, and pressed her lips on the pale cheek, "shall I try to comfort you with the same word wherewith I am comforted myself? Shall I try to lead you where grand-mamma's hand would point for true peace and patience?" Blanche gazed with surprise in her mother's face. She had seen that graceful mother do the honours of their house, admired and courted by the world, and had daily received from her every proof of maternal love and care; but she knew not that she could now minister to the wants of her immortal spirit, and guide her young heart to the source of peace in suffering and disappointment.

But Mrs. Jermyn had been roused by her child's

request, on the eve of taking possession of their new home, that all their sources of happiness might be insured to their continued possession. She had trembled at the very greatness and fulness of her earthly blessings, and silent and unobserved she had listened to the "words spoken in season" by her mother-in-law, and had found her way through the snares of the enemy to the feet of Him in whose favour is life, and in whose arms the sorrow of "the night" may be borne, because of the joy that "cometh in the morning." And now it was her happy privilege to lead the child on whom so many earthly hopes had centred, to the same Saviour, to read to her of God in Christ receiving sinners, and to seek with her the quieting grace of the Holy Comforter under the painful trial with which Divine love was arresting the thoughts, and turning the current of the affections, ere they were squandered and lost among the transient pleasures of earth.

For four years Blanche was obliged to be continually in a reclining posture. Her father murmured and mourned over the privations of her youthful life, and yet almost dreaded the hour when her health should be pronounced to be sufficiently restored to permit a change, and shrank with keen anguish from the wreck of his fond hopes and parental pride. The graceful form which had once sat the pony to perfection, was checked in its upward growth, and the dreaded deformity was painfully manifest; and though her face bore a stamp of beauty with which a Christian gazer must be charmed, it was no longer that which fashion patronizes, or the world admires.

Mr. Jermyn felt that to himself, if not to her, an introduction into gay society would involve discontent and disappointment, and yielded to her wish to continue her studies and her retirement for a longer period.

"My blighted flower," he muttered, in mingled grief and anger, "why was this cruel mischief permitted?"

Blanche caught the words, though not intended for her ear, and many a tearful prayer arose, that some day her father might be enabled to appreciate the far better gifts bestowed, in exchange for those which were taken away.

One evening, as Mr. Jermyn's carriage drove in, a little boy stood at his gate, admiring the trees and flowers that adorned the drive. No kind word invited him to enter, no smile encouraged his curiosity, and nothing but the activity with which he dexterously evaded the coachman's uplifted lash, attracted any attention. Mr. Jermyn envied the light movements of the wayside child, and would have exchanged his mansion as it stood for power to do likewise. He had for some time been suffering from lameness, and was now sentenced by a consultation of physicians to an operation on the success of which his life depended, and previous to which all his affairs must be arranged as completely as if death presided over the operators' instrument.

Mr. Jermyn prepared with the stern pride of a heathen hero, determined to do, and bear, and die if need be, like a man whose honourable and upright life defies an imputation. But this was cold comfort on a bed of

sickness, vain boasting on a bed of death. In the secret recesses of the dark soul there was an uneasy fear that something more was wanting; and a gaze of irony passed over the splendours of his luxuriant home, as he thought how vain was all the labour after happiness which he had spent under the sun, if this were the premature conclusion of the matter, if "the bowl were to be broken at the fountain," and "the silver cord loosed" so soon.

Blanche and her mother mingled their tears and prayers for a blessing on the use of means, and in the trying emergency were sustained with a strength and courage which rivalled in effect, as it was superior in origin to, that of the sufferer himself.

The operation was for the time successful; but before Mr. Jermyn had been able to obey the gardener's urgent invitation to view some choice exotics, then blooming in their rare and transient beauty, a relapse took place, and he was again prostrated in a state more hopeless than before, since no skill could again attack the root of the disease.

"This is bitterly disappointing, Blanche," he said, as he felt the warm tear of his gentle child upon the hand she fondly clasped. "The operation that promised to kill or cure was infinitely preferable to the lingering suspense of my present state."

"Dear papa, God is wise and merciful, and does nothing without a reason we should approve, if we knew it."

"I suppose so, child; but it seems nevertheless unreasonable to protract suffering, when one is ready and willing to submit to even a fatal termination."

"What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," murmured Blanche, in the soft whisper of almost unconscious utterance.

"You are quite a heroine, Blanche, after all," said her father. "I observe, with satisfaction, the comfort you are to your dear mother; and as for your own trials, my child, you have borne them like a little philosopher."

"How much rather I would hear you say, 'like a little Christian,' dear papa!" said Blanche timidly; "for it is only in the power of my Father in heaven to enable me to endure the loss of my father on earth."

Mr. Jermyn drew the young speaker to his bosom, and honoured in his heart the effort he witnessed to check the burst of sorrow which would have distressed and unmanned him.

"My Blanche must teach me to be brave," he said; "for I acknowledge that I am a coward at the thought of a lingering illness."

"Dear papa, if you could hear a voice from heaven saying, 'Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee: yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness,' would it not comfort you?"

The parent listened to the soft voice that whispered this Divine promise in his ear, and was some time silent. At last he said, "Did you ever hear such a voice from heaven, Blanche?"

"I heard it by God's Spirit in my soul," said Blanche. "It was that which enabled me to live in peace and patience, as my dear disappointed father's blighted

flower;" and her voice faltered as she uttered the well remembered words.

"You are no blighted flower, my precious child; you are blooming for a better world,"—and one of those looks of early fondness, which Blanche had often missed, again animated her father's face. He bade her repeat the passage of Scripture, and her heart rose in grateful praise to God; for she believed that her prayer was about to be answered.

"It is Jesus who makes that promise, papa,—a just God and a Saviour met in Him only; and only to those who believe in Him can such words be spoken."

"Why so, Blanche? if I remember aright, they are in the Old Testament."

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of it all," said Blanche. "The Word who was with God and was God, spoke from the beginning, and only by Him have we access to the Father, and a right to appropriate any Divine promise. Faith in Him, dear papa, must precede comfort through Him."

"Then you do not think the promise is for me, Blanche," said Mr. Jermyn, after a pause.

"Oh, yes, I do, when you have come to Jesus as the sinner's Saviour," she eagerly answered.

"But you do not know that I shall do that."

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," softly repeated Blanche; and "if any two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

"Blanche," said Mr. Jermyn suddenly, "I begin to

believe that I owe to you a lingering illness rather than a sudden death, that your faith and hope may be taught to me; for I have lived without a thought of God thus revealed in Christ, but I no longer dare to die without Him."

Blanche flew to her mother's arms to tell with joy and praise this blessed news; and from that day, one or other was ever employed in reading to the invalid from the Book of life, which was mighty through God to pull down the stronghold of self-righteous pride, and demolish the false courage of heathen stoicism, leading the fallen helpless child of Adam, in humility and prayer, to the foot of the Saviour's cross.

And now what a change had passed over that once worldly home! The sickness was indeed unto death, but it was only as the gate of glory. There was indeed sorrow, but it was not without hope; and through many months of pain and weakness, the "merchant princes" who called with kind solicitude to inquire concerning the health of the body, were often invited to the couch to hear of a peace which passeth understanding, and to bear away a warning from His hand who can strike down the strong man in his strength, who rules over the army of heaven and the inhabitants of earth, whose works and ways are truth and judgment, and who is able to abase them that walk in pride.

"May God, for Christ's sake, forgive me all!" were among the last words of the dying man—"but three sins especially,—that I have wasted years and money on my own selfish gratification, regardless of Him who

gave me both ; that I dared to denounce his perfect, happy way of complete salvation, as gloomy, cheerless, and fanatical ; and that, in the angry disappointment of my worldly hopes and selfish pride, I presumed to call a plant of God's right hand my 'blighted flower.' Blanche, thy faith and love and patience are rewarded ; thy father adores thy God, and blesses Him for thee."

A MORNING CAROL.

"The Baron von Canitz lived in the latter half of the seventeenth century, and was engaged in the service of the electors of Brandenburg, both of the great elector and his successor. He was the author of several hymns, one of which is of remarkable beauty, as may be seen in the following translation, for the greatest part of which I am indebted to the kindness of a friend ; but the language of the original, in several places, cannot be adequately translated into English."—*Dr. Arnold.*

COME, my soul, thou must be waking—
Now is breaking
O'er the earth another day ;
Come to Him who made this splendour—
See thou render
All thy feeble powers can pay.

From the stars thy course be learning ;
Dimly burning,
'Neath the sun their light grows pale :
So let all that sense delighted,
While benighted
From God's presence, fade and fail.

Lo ! how all of breath partaking,
Gladly waking,
Hail the sun's enlivening light !
Plants, whose life mere sap doth nourish,
Rise and flourish,
When He breaks the shades of night.

Thou, too, hail the light returning—
Ready burning

Be the incense of thy powers ;
For the night is safely ended—
God hath tended,

With his care, thy helpless hours.

Pray that He may prosper ever
Each endeavour,

When thine aim is good and true ;
But that He may ever thwart thee,
And convert thee,

When thou evil wouldst pursue.

Think that He thy ways beholdeth—
He unfoldeth

Every fault that lurks within ;
Every stain of shame gloss'd over,
Can discover,

And discern each deed of sin.

Fetter'd to the fleeting hours,

All our powers,

Vain and brief, are borne away.

Time, my soul, thy ship is steering,
Onward veering,

To the gulf of death a prey.

Mayst thou, then, on life's last morrow,
Free from sorrow,

Pass away in slumber sweet ;
And, released from death's dark sadness,
Rise in gladness,

That far brighter Sun to greet.

Only God's free gifts abuse not,
His light refuse not,

But still his Spirit's voice obey ;
Soon shall joy thy brow be wreathing,
Splendour breathing,

Fairer than the fairest day.

If aught of care this morn oppress thee,
To Him address thee,

Who, like the sun, is good to all ;
He gilds the mountain tops, the while
His gracious smile

Will on the humblest valley fall.

Round thee gifts His bounty showers ;
Walls and towers,

Girt with flames, thy God shall rear ;
Angel legions to defend thee
Shall attend thee—

Hosts whom Satan's self shall fear.



THE CITY ON THE WATERS.

“There is a glorious city in the sea ;
The sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,
Ebbing and flowing ; and the salt sea-weed
Clings to the marble of her palaces.
No track of men, nor footsteps to and fro,
Lead to her gates. The path lies o’er the sea,
Invisible ; and from the land we went,
As in a floating city ;—steering in,
And gliding up her streets as in a dream,
So smoothly, silently,—by many a dome,
Mosque-like, and many a stately portico,
The statues ranged along an azure sky,—
By many a pile in more than eastern splendour,
Of old the residence of merchant kings.”

ROGERS.

VENICE, once the capital of a small but formidable republic, now a valuable appendage to the crown of Austria, is built on a cluster of islands, upwards of sixty in number. Its position has obtained for it the name of “The City on the Waters.” One hundred and forty narrow canals serve the purpose of streets, and for the high road of traffic. These streams are spanned by three hundred and eighty-six bridges,—the most famous of which, known as the Rialto, crosses the Grand Canal. The confined passages which divide the houses on the land do not admit of coaches, and scarcely of a saddle-horse. The passengers chiefly move from place to place by means of gondolas, a superior sort of canoe,

which in historic and poetic associations are adorned with many-tinted tapestry and other gay embellishments, but which now are painted in one sombre colour, black.

The city of Venice, in its palmy days, when under the government of its own doges, or dukes, was the scene of festivals and pageants, of splendour and luxury. But it stands out conspicuously in the history of the middle ages for its commercial enterprise. Its factories were found in various parts of the earth. It was the carrier to the Crusades, and of the principal merchandise of Europe, and at one time possessed three thousand vessels. Important manufactories were successfully established on its clustered isles; and its extensive trade and abundant wealth gave it pre-eminence over all other cities for a long course of ages. It obtained, too, honourable mention, at a very early period, for its cultivation of the arts. Titian, Paul Veronese, Tintoretto, and other names, shed a lustre over the Venetian school of painting.

At the present day, Venice receives the admiration of the traveller for its splendid cathedral, its massive ducal palace, the marble mansions of the nobility, its libraries, its noble galleries of paintings, and its riches in other works of art. "Leaning over the battlements of the Rialto, and looking down upon the canal, the stranger in Venice is struck with the *tout ensemble* of the scene. The buildings of various architecture on both sides, the winding course of the stream making them meet as it were in the distance—windows, balconies, steps, and mooring piers diversifying the surfaces of the building on either hand—gondolas and other craft

shooting to and fro with astonishing rapidity, but though numerous, and crossing one another's path, and sometimes seeming to threaten a collision, yet never touching each other—the graceful motion of the gondolier as he skilfully guides his vessel, and the diversified colours which dapple the picture, supplied by the costume of the boatmen and passengers, and often by a freight consisting of vegetables, especially heaps of yellow melons, like huge balls of gold, intermixed with bright green leaves—all these objects form themselves into a picture scarcely to be seen elsewhere, and once seen not to be soon forgotten by one who has an artist's eye.”*

* Venice, Past and Present : Monthly Volume, No. 88.

THE
VISIT TO THE SEA-SIDE;

OR, SELF-DENIAL.

“You think, doctor, that the case is serious?”

“Yes, I do: that is, serious in its probable and almost certain consequences.”

“And yet, surely, there does not seem so very much the matter with Mr. Hillier.”

“You mean, he is not confined to his bed; and he manages to get to business regularly, and can sit at the desk ten hours a-day without falling off his seat?”

“Why, I suppose I do mean something like that. Poor Hillier certainly is very much altered; but he does not complain.”

“No; it is not always the loudest complainers, Mr. Duncan, who most call for sympathy and professional skill. But, I suppose your friend does not particularly suffer, and is not aware how much cause for anxiety he has—so it is probable he does not complain; but he is very ill. Almost every symptom is that of hopeless disease already commenced.”

Mr. Duncan started, and turned full upon his medical friend. They were walking together in a busy street: —“Hopeless, doctor! Hopeless disease, my dear sir!

THE VISIT TO THE SEA-SIDE.

I am shocked to hear you say that. I guessed there was something wrong with poor Hillier, or I should not have urged him to consult you; but hopeless disease! I could not have dreamt of it."

"Hopeless, I mean, looking at all circumstances; not hopeless in itself, certainly."

"I am not sure that I understand you, doctor," said Mr. Duncan.

"I mean simply that your friend cannot take the only means I can recommend—the most likely means at any rate—for obtaining relief."

"Medicine?"

"Medicine—that is to say drugs—may patch him up for a time; but will do him little permanent good, I fear."

"What then, doctor, would remove his case from the category of hopelessness?"

"Relaxation, quiet, complete change of air and scene. I am not over fond of sending every patient to the sea-side; but for your friend, nothing would be so likely to restore health as sea air, and sea bathing, the saline particles——"

"You think that would do it?"

"I cannot say, sir; life and death, health and disease, are, happily, not in my hands: I speak only of probabilities, according to the best of my judgment. But when I hinted this to Mr. Hillier, he impatiently told me he could not take my advice. I told him, if he keeps himself chained to the desk, as he says he has done for twenty years and more, I would not answer for consequences 'Then I must die,' he said. I suspect your friend is poor, Mr. Duncan."

"I suppose he is, doctor; that is, I do not suppose about it: I know he must be, unhappily. And you think, then, he cannot go on much longer?"

"I should say not, certainly," replied the physician, significantly. "Good evening," he added, as he came to a cross street; and the gentlemen, shaking hands, parted.

Mr. Duncan and Mr. Hillier were employed in the same office. There was considerable difference, however, in their several positions. Mr. Duncan was managing and confidential clerk, with not a large, certainly, but a comfortable income: and though his situation involved much responsibility, it released him from much of the drudgery of his profession. Mr. Hillier filled only a subordinate situation; and while his labour was more monotonous and tiring, his salary was proportionately small. The two clerks were nearly of an age; but while the superior had only a small household, and this not entirely dependent on his own exertions, the subordinate had a large family to provide for out of his limited resources.

The physician had spoken of Mr. Hillier as Mr. Duncan's friend; but the connexion between them scarcely warranted that title. They had little intercourse with each other, except that which related to the every-day business of the office. By Hillier, if the truth were known, the superior clerk was looked upon with something like envy, and perhaps a slight shade of dislike, arising from the punctilious and strict attention to business he exacted from his subordinates, joined to a reserve which seemed to border upon pride; and it was greatly to the surprise, and a little, it may

be, to the annoyance of Mr. Hillier, that he had been that day urged by Mr. Duncan, and had submitted, to a consultation with his medical friend.

We often form very erroneous opinions of those whom we constantly meet but only under one set of circumstances. If Mr. Hillier had known either less or more of his superior in office, he would have thought him neither proud nor unfeeling: but he had just that quantity of knowledge which gave colouring to the charge; and if the proceedings of Mr. Duncan had that day surprised him, he would have been still more astonished could he have been made aware of the current of that gentleman's thoughts as he walked slowly homewards, after parting with the doctor.

Mr. Duncan was not long in reaching his home; but instead of immediately entering, he walked slowly past his door, entered a neighbouring square, and made a long circuit before he returned.

It was a fine, warm, cloudless evening, near Midsummer. The day—in the confined office, at any rate—had been stiflingly hot; and Mr. Duncan was perhaps glad to cool himself in a refreshing breeze which had just sprung up and was rustling pleasantly in the trees of the square. He had the privilege of *entrée*; the key of the iron gate was in his pocket; and, on a seat under a shady lime-tree in the square, he at length abandoned himself to his musings.

In the small drawing-room of his comfortable home, Mrs. Duncan and her two daughters were busily employed at needlework. Muslins and other articles lay tumbled upon the table, with paper patterns, work-boxes, straw bonnets, and ribbons. The drawing-room

was, that evening at least, a work room: but a very pleasant one. Its accessories told of easy circumstances and cultivated taste. There were the piano, and the folios of music, and the well-framed paintings on the walls, and the richly-bound volumes on the rosewood table. One was open; it was the Natural History of the Marine Plants of the country, with engravings.

The book had, probably, been recently referred to, for the conversation of the three ladies ran upon a long-contemplated excursion to the Isle of Wight, and the pleasures in store for them in rambling among the rocks of the sea-shore, and the comfort of being able to get away for a whole month, or perhaps two, from home, and of shaking off the dull routine of a city life.

"And it will be such a pleasure to have papa with us all the time," said Helen Duncan: "it is so long since we had a holiday all together; and he is so light-hearted and merry when he does get away from business. Oh, how we shall enjoy ourselves!"

"It is five years since we spent that month at Brighton: ah! that was a happy time," said Caroline Duncan; "I do wish we could go out every summer. I think people who are in business and work so hard as papa does, and have so much to wear them out, ought to have a good long holiday once a-year, at any rate."

"There are many persons," said Mrs. Duncan, "who work as hard as your father, and in some ways much harder, and have not nearly so many comforts as we have, who cannot get a holiday once in their lives. We have much to be thankful for."

"Poor people! I am sure I am sorry for them," replied Caroline: "but, mamma, do you not think it

would be better to make this hem a little—just a little broader? because—;” and thus they lightened their pleasant occupation.

On that same evening, and at the same hour, a pale, weary man threaded his way slowly through the thronged streets towards a poorer suburb. His hand was occasionally pressed to his side, to relieve, if it might be, the dull constant pain he felt there; and care sat heavily on his saddened brow. “It won’t be for long,” he said, half aloud and unconsciously, as he entered the narrow, unwholesome street, which contained *his* home; “no, it won’t be for long,—

“Earth’s stormy night will soon be o’er,
The raging winds shall cease,”

and if it were not for them—for *them*—” and his hand was on the latch of his door.

There were females busily at work in the small room Mr. Hillier entered: for he was the pale, weary man. His wife and his eldest daughter were plying the needle, but not for their own adornment; and the conversation, which was interrupted by the return of the father and husband, was not so cheerful that they might renew it in his presence. They had talked of him and his failing health, and tears were in their eyes, which they hastily brushed away, for they loved him.

And so did the poor crippled boy, who sat in his little chair by the table, leaning over a book with downcast eyes and heavy heart; for the whispered and half-expressed apprehensions of his mother had reached his ears;—Poor father! dear father! he is not going to die, and leave his helpless one behind?

The father took the helpless one, and lifted him

gently on to his knee, and kissed him; and the boy put his arms round his father's neck, and hid his face, that his reddened eyes and still gathering tears might be hidden too. He was soon in bed, for he had waited only to welcome his father home; and presently the father and mother were by themselves.

"You are not so well to-day, dearest?"

"Much the same; I suppose the heat has rather tired me."

"And the pain in your side?"

"Not much, Mary; it is as well—as well as it ever will be."

"Oh, don't say so, dear husband; you will get rid of it, I hope, soon."

"Yes, soon, Mary; it is a true word—soon; 'Earth's stormy night will *soon* be o'er.'"

The poor wife's heart was already overcharged; she could bear no more till tears came to her relief.

"Dear George," she said at length, "I know you are not so well to-day; you looked so sadly and tired when you came in: but don't speak—don't *think* so mournfully. You will be better by-and-by; but you must have advice."

"I have seen a doctor to-day, Mary; one of the first physicians in the city, I am told."

"Oh, I am glad of that—only—but how came you to go to him, George? and what does he say?—not that you are really ill? Oh, tell me—do tell me all."

"I did not go to him, Mary," replied Mr. Hillier, quietly; "he came to me. Mr. Duncan got us together, somehow. I am afraid it is pride in me; but I am vexed at being talked into it."

"Do not be vexed, dear: I am glad you did consult him: and it was kind of Mr. Duncan: how came he to do it?"

"He told me I did not seem well; and he asked me if I would oblige him by speaking to his physician, who would be in the office presently; and so I did. But I can see through it. Mr. Duncan has set his mind on going out—to the Isle of Wight, I believe—for a month; and he is afraid, I suppose, I shall break down while he is away, and so he would like to patch me up for his own convenience. I am sorry I was so stupid as to have anything to do with his doctor."

"It was very selfish, then, if that was his motive: but perhaps he did not mean it so, dear; we cannot always judge of motives, you know. But," added Mrs. Hillier, hesitatingly, "you have not told me what the doctor says."

"He says," replied the husband, gloomily, "just what Elisha sent as a message to Benhadad, and said to Hazael; you know what that was, Mary."

"What was it?" she asked, falteringly.

"Why,—'Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the Lord hath showed me that he shall surely die.'"

"George! what do you mean?"

"He tells me, in plain terms, that unless I can get away from work, and have complete rest and change for I don't know how long, I shall keep getting worse till—and Mary, if it were not for you and our poor, poor children, I would not turn a straw to be better. Why," he added, passionately, "did I ever ask you to marry me—why?"

The wife sat a little while in silence and sorrow, and

then calmly and softly, she answered, "I know, dearest husband, why we married;—was it not because we loved each other almost as much then as now? and that we might share each other's joys and bear one another's burdens? And we have been happy, thank God for *that*; and we may be happy still, if we do not let trouble drive us away from our resting-place. 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.'* Let me read that psalm to you."

She read it, and they were comforted.

"How late papa is to-night!" said Caroline Duncan; "I wonder what keeps him away. He was to give us his opinion about these—Oh, there he is!" and as she spoke, Mr. Duncan's feet were on the stairs.

"I am glad you are come, papa: we were just wanting you. Here is your chair, and—"

"How grave you look, papa!" said Helen. "Have you—"

"Your father is tired, dears, and wants his tea; I'll go and see if it is ready, while he changes his coat. And don't tease him about that finery now. Any time will do for that," said Mrs. Duncan; and presently they sat at the tea-table.

But Mr. Duncan was still grave; and when he spoke at all it was to reply in monosyllables to the questions he was asked. "It has been very warm to-day, papa." "Yes, it has, Helen." "There is nothing unpleasant going on in the city, Mr. Duncan?" "No, my love." At length, the conversation became more brisk, and

* Psalm xli. 1.

Mr. Duncan roused himself from what Caroline called his "brown study."

"Have you had the answer about our lodgings?" Mrs. Duncan asked.

"Yes, we can have them. Indeed Mr. Smith has engaged them for us."

"They are not too dear, I hope."

"No—yes—no—I do not know that they are. I should suppose not. Three guineas a week. It is not more than I expected."

"Oh dear no, papa, I should think not," said Helen; "Mrs. Gee said we should get none worth having under that. And when are we to go, papa? We shall very soon be ready."

Mr. Duncan's gravity returned. "What will you say, Helen, when I tell you that my plans are altered, and that I do not intend to take this excursion with you?"

"Papa!" exclaimed Caroline.

"You are only joking, papa. You say that just to tease us," said Helen.

"Your father does not seem to be joking; but I do not understand him. I am afraid he has been sadly vexed to-day," said Mrs. Duncan, "Have you not, Charles?" she asked.

"No, not vexed; but grieved and shocked. But I need not speak in parables. You know Mr. Hillier?"

"We have heard you speak of him often."

"Well, I have noticed for some time that he has not been well. He has never said anything about it; but it is plain enough; and to-day, when Dr. B—— called on me, I asked him to see poor Hillier. This evening I have had a long conversation with the doctor; and

he says the poor fellow is in a very bad way,—so bad, that if he goes on much longer without taking measures for relief, he will die.”

“Dear, dear! I am very sorry to hear that. He has a large family, has he not?” said Mrs. Duncan.

“Yes, several children, all dependent on him, and one of them a cripple from infancy, with spinal disease, I believe.”

Helen and Caroline seemed to say, by their looks, that they were sorry for the poor clerk and his family; but did not see why their father should have changed his plans on their account. His remaining at home would not do them any good, would it? Mr. Duncan went on:—

“I cannot think of pleasure-taking while poor Hillier is dying by inches, and when I know that my absence from business will throw additional work and responsibility on him, and thus hasten his death. That is one thing: and another is, Hillier himself must, by some means or other, have a holiday, and a long one;” and then Mr. Duncan repeated what the physician had said respecting “relaxation, change of air and scene, sea-air and sea-bathing.” “It is not necessary to my health,” added Mr. Duncan, “that I should take the jaunt; but, in all probability, years might be added to Hillier’s life, if he could be prevailed on to take Dr. B——’s advice.”

“But can he take it?” Mrs. Duncan asked.

“I can help him to take it so far as rest is concerned, by obtaining leave of absence for him, for a month or two, if need be, without loss of salary to him: and this I shall do to-morrow.”

"But will he be able then to get away from home and take the means Dr. B—— recommends?"

Mr. Duncan shook his head doubtfully. Helen and Caroline looked mournfully at each other; their cherished and anticipated enjoyment was half blighted in the bud. If their father did not go with them, they should lose much of the pleasure of the jaunt; and that he had made up his mind, they were quite sure. Mrs. Duncan was thoughtful.

"There is something else on your mind, Charles," she said, after a long silence. "You are thinking how to help poor Hillier to take the doctor's full advice."

"Something like that, perhaps. At least, I have been thinking what a luxury it would be."

"Is that *all* you were thinking?"

"Not quite *all*, Helen."

"Papa, will you tell me how much our holiday will cost you?" asked Helen, timidly, the next morning, as the Duncans sat at breakfast.

"I cannot tell you exactly; but I had laid aside thirty pounds for it; and I expect, though I do not go with you, there will be only empty purses to show me when you return."

"But, papa, we have been thinking that it is not needful for us to spend this extra money; we are very well, you know, and have a nice pleasant home that we have no occasion to run away from,—and—and—oh, mamma, do help me!"

"We have been thinking, dear," said Mrs. Duncan, thus appealed to, "that if this holiday of ours were *quite* given up for this summer ——"

"The lodgings are already taken you know."

"Yes, but could we not find substitutes? Come, I see I must speak out. Helen and Caroline think that their father wishes to help poor Mr. Hillier, but does not see exactly how it is to be done. Now, a part of that thirty pounds—"

There was not much more said; there was no need for many words. The walk to the office was very pleasant to Mr. Duncan that morning; and if a shade of regret was cast on Helen's and Caroline's brows when the half-finished work of yesterday, and the open book, first met their eyes, and reminded them of the pleasure they had abandoned, that shade was soon chased away by the sunshine of peace.

A week later, and Mr. Hillier, with his wife and their little cripple, was on his way to the Isle of Wight, with a full heart. Another month—but we need not lengthen our story. The physician was correct in his judgment; the disease was not hopelessly incurable; and when, a month later still, the Duncans knew that the convalescent had returned to the office, with no pale, haggard cheeks, and aching side, but with every threatening symptom removed, they felt how cheaply may sometimes be purchased the pleasures of self-denial.

COUSIN MARY'S STORY.

"Judge not, that ye be not judged."

"CHARITY—doth not behave itself unseemly: thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; hopeth all things;—never faileth."

THERE is no need of saying in what particular county the snug and retired little village which I shall take the liberty of calling Eiderdown is to be found; it is enough, that for a few short years of my life—the early years of womanhood—it was my occasional home.

Not long ago, I heard a gentleman, who should be wise if grey hairs bring wisdom, enlarging eloquently on the superior religious advantages of a country village life. No tumult nor hurry and bustle there; no distracting envyings, and jealousies, and strifes; heaven's calm sunshine above, and earth's flowery paths for the feet to tread; time passing peacefully away in quiet contemplation, joined with active benevolence, social kindness, and good will—meet preparations for the everlasting rest.

Our friend was warm and earnest, the picture he drew was beautiful and inviting; but — but to my story.

"These new people at Whitenest, Mrs. Lane—do you know anything about them?"

My friend and hostess shook her head negatively.

She had made some inquiries, she said,—and indeed she had, as I could have borne witness,—but she could find out neither who they were, nor whence they came, nor why they had come to Eiderdown at all.

Miss Spinner also shook her head, and there was a great deal of mystery in that shake. “I cannot make them out either,” she said, “only that they have taken Whitenest for a year, just as it is, furniture and all; and that they are looking out for a servant to do the rough work.”

“I understood they brought a servant with them,” said Mrs. Lane.

“No, not a servant; as far as I can understand, the young woman is a sort of companion; and, would you believe it? she is deaf and dumb!”

“None so deaf as those who won’t hear, or so dumb as those who won’t speak; I suppose that is it, Miss Spinner?”

“No, I do not mean that; the girl is actually deaf and dumb. Now, does not that look suspicious? Mutes, you know, cannot tell tales.”

“And the ladies, if they are ladies——” Enough of this conversation; let me explain.

Whitenest well deserved its name. It was a pretty cottage, on the smallest scale compatible with genteel comfort, and almost concealed from vulgar gaze by a thick shrubbery, from which the cottage, with thatched roof and white painted walls, half covered with climbing plants, was separated by a small lawn. It was in a warm, sheltered nook, near the bottom of the valley of Eiderdown, and the clear sparkling rivulet which wound through and watered the valley, all but inclosed the

little domain as within a silver ring, and made necessary a rustic bridge, which was a picturesque object from the village street, at about a furlong off. Thus much for a description of Whitenest, which, since the death of its owner, an elderly bachelor, two years before, had remained untenanted until within a week or two of the time at which my story begins.

Then a gentlemanly looking personage, calling himself Smith, or Smithet, or Smithers—the poor woman who showed the premises was deaf, and could not catch the sound, she said—armed with authority from the landlord, who lived at a distance, came and took possession of Whitenest; and a few days afterwards, a post chaise from the nearest town entered Eiderdown, drove straight to the cottage, and after a short delay, returned by the way it came. On entering the village, its occupants were three females; on leaving Eiderdown, it contained only the gentleman—Smith, Smithet, or Smithers; and all that could be learned of the post-boy, as he stopped to bait his horses at the King's Arms, was, that the ladies had arrived at the town on the previous evening by the London coach, and that the names on their trunks, hand-boxes, and other luggage, was G——.

After the departure of the chaise, all that could be ascertained respecting these new inhabitants, served only as a whet to curiosity. Deaf widow Archer, who was retained as a temporary help, could only tell that of the two ladies the elder was called Miss G——, and the younger—very young to be a wife *she* thought—was Mrs. G——, and seemed in poor health and low spirits, which was to be accounted for by the ladies

being in mourning for an infant, who, they told her, had died only a few weeks before they came to Whitenest; but, for her part, she thought there was something more on Mrs. G——'s mind than *that*. Then, they had very curious ways, these ladies, and did not seem to know much about housekeeping, poor things! And as to the deaf and dumb girl they had brought with them, she was only fit to do needlework, which was what she was used to, and had a little room to herself to do it in, but she often sat with the ladies for company, though it was queer company *she* could be, who could only talk with her fingers.

It is needless to repeat the further gossip of dame Archer, which was eagerly listened for by her neighbours of all conditions; but the result of which was, that before the objects of it were well settled down in their new home, a variety of strange and contradictory reports concerning them were spread through all Eiderdown.

And yet nothing could be more simple and less deserving of suspicion than the plain tale our new neighbours had to tell, if it had been received in the exercise of that charity which "believeth all things," and "thinketh no evil."

"I think we should call on these ladies at Whitenest," said my friend Mrs. Lane; "they were at church last Sunday, and it is etiquette, you know."

Mrs. Lane was a stickler for etiquette, so we turned our steps towards Whitenest, and were politely received by Miss G——, who told us in the conversation which ensued, and in a quiet, self-possessed sort of way, that her young friend was the wife, and herself the sister,

of a gentleman who had been unexpectedly and hastily obliged to go abroad. If the health of Mrs. G—— and other circumstances had permitted, her sister and herself would have accompanied the gentleman; but this being improper, and his business imperative, they had sought out a retirement in the country. Having accidentally seen an advertisement of Whitenest, they had fixed on Eiderdown as their home until the gentleman's return, which might be a few months hence; or, perhaps, as she feared, his absence might be more prolonged.

"Very plausible this, my dear Mrs. Lane," was Miss Spinner's comment on the account we afterwards gave her of this interview; but do you not see that nothing is easier than to make up a good story? And why should these persons have come to this place at all, where they are not known, and without an introduction? why did they not stop at home, wherever their home has been?—and why?—and why?—and why?—and why?—I leave these blanks to be filled up by any Miss Spinner who may happen to read this story.

Now, it should be known that our society at Eiderdown was limited, and we prided ourselves on its being very select. Once upon a time, a transitory inhabitant and his family had been *black-balled* because they had been formerly contaminated by trade: tradespeople were all very well in their way, and in their proper places, Mrs. Captain Ball said, but they had no business in "good society." It became a question, therefore, of grave importance, whether the strangers of Whitenest could be admitted within the privileged boundary; and, shortly after our call of "etiquette," it was

decided in full conference, that they should receive no further marks of recognition from us of "the good society" of Eiderdown, until a satisfactory solution had been given of certain doubts that were entertained of their fitness for that honour.

Nevertheless, we did not by any means hold ourselves absolved from the exercise of natural curiosity; and I should be ashamed to lay bare all the devices by which we sought to gratify it, and to confess with what excessive avidity "the good society" of Eiderdown listened to any additional gossip from any quarter, respecting our new neighbours. It did not amount to much. Whoever or whatever they were, they lived very quiet lives, employing themselves in ordinary occupations, or "like any other ladies," as Nelly Green, the maid of all work, whom they had at length secured, said, when closely questioned; and she also said that they were very good mistresses, she never wanted better, she was sure. It soon became known, too, that the ladies at Whitenest were very kind and charitable to sundry of the poor around them, especially that they frequently visited old dame Stone, who, as well as being poor, was also bedridden, and had no one to take care of her but a dirty, sullen girl from the parish workhouse; and that they read the Bible to the poor old creature, and "talked beautiful" to her, she said, in a way that she could understand; and prevailed on the blundering help, by a little judicious encouragement, to pay more attention to the invalid, to whom, also, they often sent nice broth and other messes, by their deaf and dumb attendant.

Months passed away, and no new light was cast on

the mystery which all Eiderdown was determined should envelop the tenants of Whitenest. They did not get into debt, as was at first predicted, though there were signs of their being anything but rich. Neither was it known that a single visitor ever crossed the rustic bridge to disturb their retirement. By common consent, Whitenest was an interdicted spot to the "good society" of Eiderdown; the little river was a cordon, never to be passed; and, whatever might be their secret mortification at this neglect, the ladies silently acquiesced in it. A gentle effort or two which they made to cultivate acquaintance with my friend Mrs. Lane and myself, their nearest neighbours of any note, having been repulsed with some dignity on her part, and scorn on my own, they subsided into their former position, and were thereafter seldom seen beyond the boundaries of their cottage grounds, except when making an occasional visit to their poor pensioners, or in their constant attendance on the single Sunday service of the parish church.

I must say that, before a full year had rolled round, the quiet and inoffensive demeanour of the strangers had begun to work a favourable change in our opinions; and in further process of time, we might so far have dismissed our prejudices, as to admit of an interchange of common civilities, if our active friend Miss Spinner had not, at the eleventh hour, as she said, made a discovery which caused us all to congratulate ourselves on the wise and prudent discretion we had exercised. Not being quite so eager, however, as was Miss Spinner to reveal the secret, I shall speak first of an incident which immediately preceded its disclosure.

"It is a long time since we heard anything of old dame Stone," said Mrs. Lane one morning as we were walking; "suppose we were to look in upon her."

It certainly had been a long time. My friend was benevolent, and had often, in former times, relieved the poor widow's deep poverty; but since Mrs. Stone had been "taken in hand and petted," as she said, by the strangers, her benevolence had sensibly relaxed. Moreover, she had an instinctive dislike to sick rooms, and I wondered at her sudden proposal; but before I could express my surprise, we were at the cottage door.

It was a poor tenement, of two small rooms on the same floor. The inner was the bed-room, to which, for many years, the aged invalid had been confined by incurable disease. A gentle tap at the outer door was unheeded, and we entered. There was no one in the room, and we were about to pass through it, when a voice in the chamber arrested our steps. It was soft and gentle; and we could distinguish that the words spoken were passages of Scripture. Then came a pause, and then, in the same sweet tones, words of comfort, encouragement, and hope. We heard, too, the feeble responses of the aged woman speaking of gratitude, that ever such kindness as she had experienced for so many months past had been shown to a poor afflicted being like herself.

"Indeed, it is but little, very little, that we have been able to do to lighten your affliction," said the younger speaker; it is nothing when we think of what has been done for us by our Saviour and yours."

"It has been the cup of cold water, given to a disciple, a poor unworthy disciple," said the old woman

with energy; "and, dear lady, *you* know who has said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least'—the least, think of that!—'one of the *least* of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'"

And here let me say, that dame Stone was one of those who, though poor in this world, are "rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him." I did not know then, nor could I have understood had I been told, the secret which sweetened her bitter lot, and enabled her to bear uncomplainingly her heavy load of affliction. But it was not unknown to us that—from whatever cause—she was a pattern of patience and resignation.

There was a reply to the poor woman's ardent exclamation; but so soft and low that we could not distinguish the words; and then the speaker added, "Probably we shall not meet many more times here. We are soon about to leave Eiderdown."

"I don't wonder at it," replied the invalid; "it is an ill-natured place. There has been a deal said about you, I know; and there is nobody for you and dear Miss G—— to speak to, but such a poor creature as me."

"That is not what would send me away," said the visitor; "we have been very happy in our snug little Whitenest; but my husband——"

"Let us get away quietly," Mrs. Lane whispered to me: "whatever she is, it is not right to be listening."

So we were moving silently away, when a shadow darkened the doorway through which we had entered; and then Miss G—— stood before us. It was very awkward, certain'y. She smiled and spoke; we spoke

and blushed.—We were not aware of the intrusion of which we had been guilty, we said. We had just looked in to see the poor woman, and, finding she was not alone, we were on the point of retiring. Would Miss G—— convey our apologies to the lady whose voice we had heard?

No:—she would not hear of apology. She was glad to have met us there. Mrs. G—— would be glad too. Would we not stay and speak to her? She hoped we would not go away without performing our errand of mercy. Poor Mrs. Stone had not many visitors—not many friends; and, indeed, Miss G—— had intended intruding upon us soon, respecting poor dame Stone. Her sister and herself were about to leave Whitenest, and they had wished to place a small sum in the hands of some kind friend, for the poor woman's further occasional relief. They had thought that Mrs. Lane would kindly undertake the office, for the bedridden invalid had often spoken gratefully of that lady. It was not much, Miss G—— added, that they could spare, but—

What could we do? Before we could frame a suitable reply, we were joined by Mrs. G——; and before we parted, my friend had engaged to be the ladies' almoner, and would see, in time to come, that the poor woman should suffer no real distress which she could alleviate.

Really we could not help being cordial with these mysterious persons just then. They seemed so sincere, and so well-bred, too, as Mrs. Lane afterwards remarked, that, as we walked a little way in company, after leaving the cottage, we were even so unwise as to hope that they would favour us with their society

before leaving Eiderdown. Would they take tea with us in a friendly way? Yes, they would; and then the day was fixed. Meanwhile, Miss G—— had placed in my friend's hand a small sum in gold. It was not much, as she said, but it would serve to relieve poor dame Stone's pressing necessities for a time; and it might be that before it was exhausted, they might have it in their power to renew the donation.

"I hope we have not done wrong, my dear," said my friend, when we had parted company; "I do not know what Miss Spinner will say, or Mrs. Captain Ball, or the rest of our friends, but really they do seem very good sort of people, after all;—and then we need not let Miss Spinner know—"

I touched Mrs. Lane's arm. Just before us was the lady herself. We met and shook hands. She was glad to meet us, very; she had been to see us, and was coming away from our house disappointed. She had news; she would walk back with us. * * * * *

Yes, they were found out at last, these persons at Whitenest. It was just as we had always suspected, and worse. There it was in the newspaper—one of a year old, or thereabouts, which had come wrapped round a parcel, and which Miss Spinner had had the curiosity to look over.—Yes, there it was in black and white—printer's black, and paper-maker's white;—G——, a bankrupt, a fraudulent bankrupt! A drysalter he was, if my memory serves me rightly,—had speculated; lived in high style; failed for thousands and thousands; had committed forgery, or something closely allied to it, which brought him within verge of a criminal court; had fled the country, under a false

designation, with nobody knew how much of his creditors' property; was supposed to be in America, but his track was undiscovered, his flight had been managed with such secrecy.

This was not all. There was another discovery which Miss Spinner had made. She had coaxed the letter-carrier, our usually taciturn Eiderdown postman, into breach of confidence. *She* did not call it by this name exactly; but she had prevailed upon him to declare that he had never taken a letter away from Whitenest, bearing the direction of G——; but he *had* taken a good many directed to some foreign parts or other, he said,—a long way off it must be, because of the postage; he could not say what place it was, it might be somewhere in America, likely enough. The letters were directed to some bank in that foreign part, he *knew* that; and had a curious sort of scrawl, in one corner, to show, he supposed, that they were for somebody else.

Ah! nothing could be clearer. What with putting this and that together, dovetailing here, and adding a little conjecture there, clipping off an exuberance elsewhere with delicate ingenuity and tact; was it not as plain as daylight?

“And to think how near we were being deceived by appearances, Mary!” exclaimed Mrs. Lane; “and of their pretending to be so good, and so thoughtful and charitable!”

“And to think,” I added, rather mischievously, not in Miss Spinner’s hearing, however, “that this very Mrs. G——, the wife of this notorious gentleman, is to honour us with her company to tea!”

"That she never shall!" replied Mrs. Lane indignantly. "Miss Spinner, will you do me the very great kindness to give me this old newspaper?"

Certainly, when Mrs. Captain Ball and the rest of "the good society" of Eiderdown had seen it—oh, yes. And the next day a packet, directed to Mrs. and Miss G——, was forwarded to Whitenest. It inclosed the money which Mrs. Lane had received for poor dame Stone, the old newspaper, and a note. My friend rather prided herself in writing little notes; and with this she took unusual pains:—"Mrs. Lane and Miss H——" (Mrs. Lane was determined that I should have some of the credit of it, she said) "present their very respectful compliments to Mrs. and Miss G——." But I need not tax my memory for the exact wording of the note, which we flattered ourselves was at once so dignified in its tone and rebuke, and so polite in every turn of expression, that nothing could be better. It was effectual, at any rate. We received no reply, and the contamination and disgrace we had so imprudently courted were averted.

To be sure, when our apprehensions had subsided, a feeling of compunction crossed us, lest we had jumped at too hasty a conclusion. After all, there might be other G——s in the world, and—but no, no; the coincidences were too striking.

A month later, Whitenest was uninhabited, and "the good society" of Eiderdown breathed more freely.

* * * * *

A few years passed away, and Eiderdown was no longer my home. Changes in position and prospects

had taken place, one after another, until I was, one summer's day, a happy bride. Our honeymoon was spent in the country, two hundred miles and more from the scene of my story, among dear and valued friends of my husband. I will not say how happily the time was occupied in one excursion after another, until but a few days of our visit remained. On one of these we started to the seat of a nobleman, a few miles off, whose grounds were that day thrown open to the public. There was to be a flower show in the park, and the children of Lady B——'s schools were to be examined and rewarded, and his lordship's workpeople were to have a holiday. It was a recently established annual fête, we were told; and we were urged to go, with the promise of a day's high enjoyment. It was a bright morning. A few clouds, certainly, seemed to be gathering, and looked like a threatening of rain at some future time; but it would not rain that day, we were pretty sure of *that*. So without misgiving, we entered a carriage and drove off.

An hour's drive through a beautiful part of the country brought us to B—— Park; and having put up our carriage at the B—— Arms, we joined the groups of visitors who were flocking towards the attractions of the day. While we slowly promenaded the pleasant shady walks which invited us on every hand, our friend began to speak, in enthusiastic terms, of the noble owner of the estate, and of Lady B—— as one of the kindest, gentlest, and loveliest of women. He told of their many plans for doing good to all around them, of the simplicity of their manners, and the influence of their example. "If you had been here ten or twelve years ago," he said, "you would be astonished at the change

which has been wrought only by the persevering efforts of Lord and Lady B——."

"Are they *very* rich?" I asked.

"No, I believe not," replied our friend; "not rich, at least, for their station; and it is astonishing how much they contrive to accomplish with their comparatively slender means. They are rich, however, compared with what they were once; and there is a story about that which I would tell you if I had time,—but hark! there is the bell to tell us the flower show is opened."

There was no time for story-telling then: in a few minutes we were under the large tent, with hundreds more, admiring the scene spread before us, and the taste displayed in all the arrangements.

"There is Lord B——," whispered our friend; and at a short distance from us, mixing with the various groups within and around the tent, was the noble owner of the estate, and, leaning on his arm, a lady a few years younger than himself apparently, who was addressed as Lady B——. I could not account for it at the time; but it seemed to me that, at some former period, I had somewhere seen a lady much resembling Lady B——: but I set it down as a mere fancy, and being soon separated from the lady and her lord by a crowd of fresh company, I thought no more about the matter.

I shall not attempt to describe the sight-seeing of that day: nor how, when the visitors were again dispersed through the gardens and pleasure grounds, after the flower show had spent its first attractions, and the school examinations were over, and the rewards given, and while the school children were playing in the park,

we sat down on a retired and shady bank to rest ourselves.

"You had a story to tell us," our friend was reminded.

"Yes, a short one. It is now eight or nine years since Lord B—— succeeded to his title. He had not then been long married, and his marriage had given great offence to his uncle, the former Lord B——, because the young lady, though of a good family, had no fortune. I believe, indeed, that all his relations, except one sister, turned their backs upon him, and treated his young wife with great insolence; but this was more on account of her religious notions, as they said, than her poverty, which, though it was inconvenient, might have been forgiven. I fancy, however," said our friend, "that this was the young lady's great attraction to her lover and husband, and his sister; for they, as the old lord declared, had been unaccountably bitten with the same sort of madness, and they ought to be all shut up together, to keep them from spreading the infection.

"As I said," continued our friend, "eight or nine years ago the old Lord B—— died; and his nephew, the present lord, succeeded to the title and the poverty, for every farm and acre of the B—— estates was mortgaged to its full value. There was a considerable tract of land in one of the colonies, which was mortgaged also. This required to be personally visited, in order to be placed on a satisfactory footing, so as not to be a source of further loss, but, if possible, to be made capable of paying off its debt, and ultimately of giving a return to the proprietor. Lord B——'s determination was soon

formed ; and after making some hurried and necessary arrangements, he left England and was absent for some time.

"And Lady B——," my husband asked ; "what became of her?"

"She remained in England, and, with Lord B——'s sister, retired somewhere into the country till her husband's return. It is said that they lived in a very simple sort of way, as indeed they must have done, for they had no means of keeping up their rank ; but none of their gay friends cared much how or where they lived, so that they were out of sight."

The remembrance of the mysterious ladies at White-nest at that moment flashed across my mind. "When they went into the country," I asked, "did they, or did Lady B—— assume her title?"

Our friend could not tell. Probably she did not—most likely not.

"And her name—the name of Lord B—— before he was Lord B——?"

"Was G——," said our friend.

Shame and confusion of face covered me. I remembered the prejudices we of "the good society" of Eiderdown had entertained against our retired and retiring neighbours, the readiness with which we had listened to an evil report, which seemed to attach to them : our first and last interview, the old bedridden woman, and the little deposit of benevolence ; the old newspaper, too, and Miss Spinner, and our note, so smart and telling, as we had thought it. All this passed through my mind.

My companions did not observe my confusion, for I

had turned away my face, and my husband asked the further history of the young lord.

"After he came back from the West Indies," replied our friend, "he was joined in London by Lady B—— and his sister, and began to arrange his affairs so as to clear up some of the debts which burdened his estates. They lived for some time in great seclusion, until about five years ago, when a distant relation died, and left his lordship a large legacy, which relieved him from his difficulties, and since then——, but if we stop here any longer we shall be wet through, we must get somewhere under shelter."

In fact, the clouds of which we thought so lightly in the morning, had gathered and increased through the day; and a few occasional drops of rain, which we had wished to persuade ourselves were only heat drops, had been only the precursors of a gentle but steady shower, which while we had been listening to our friend's story, had gradually thickened, and gave token of a wet afternoon. Our nearest road to shelter was by the carriage way, across the lawn in front of the mansion, and along that road we hastened.

Rain has no consideration for bridal dresses, and soon my white veil was hanging limp and mournfully, while the gossamer shawl I wore was a sorry protection from the quick descending drops. By the time we reached the open park, we found that it was nearly cleared of visitors; and we were in a fair way of being wet through.

We were rapidly hurrying by the mansion, when a man in sober livery came towards us, and stopped our progress. His lady, he said, had seen our distress, and

begged—insisted indeed—that we should take shelter in the house.

“No—no,” I faintly uttered, “not there, Charles,” as my husband and our friend thankfully accepted the offer, and we were turning towards the hospitable hall door.

“Yes, yes,” said my husband; “why, dear Mary, you are almost drenched now, and you will take cold. This is no time for ceremony, dear;” and without attending to my further remonstrances, which he thought arose from diffidence and fear of intrusion, he led me into the hall.

From the hall into the drawing-room—yes, having shaken, dried, and re-arranged our drenched clothing,—we must go there. Lady B—— would feel hurt by our——

“I had rather not, dear Charles; oh, let us go; I will tell you some other time why I cannot meet Lady B——.”

“But it was too late; for even as I spoke, a soft hand was laid on mine; and a gentle persuasive voice, which I heard then, *not* for the first time, entreated me to accept the invitation.

What followed, seemed to my confused faculties like a dream. There were ladies in the drawing-room, and gentlemen. I have some remembrance of one in particular, who politely expressed his regret at our misfortune, and offered any accommodation in his power; and I was afterwards told that Lord B—— had had a long chat with me. I did not know it; all my powers of attention were, for the time, concentrated on three persons near me, and on whom, as by cruel

fascination, my eyes were fixed. While Lord B—— was talking to me, one of these had looked on my face with a smile of recognition—she was the deaf and dumb girl of Whitenest. In a moment I saw her glide towards the Miss G—— of my story, and then . . .

If I were an artist, and had occasion to personify the humility of Christian forbearance, I would call to memory my first introduction to Lady B——.

GIVE! GIVE!

"It is more blessed to give than to receive"

GIVE prayers : the evening hath begun ;
Be earlier than the rising sun :
Remember those who feel the rod ;
Remember those who know not God.
His hand can boundless blessings give :
Breathe prayers ; through them the soul shall live.

Give alms : the needy sink with pain ;
The orphans mourn, the crush'd complain.
Give freely : hoarded gold is curs'd,
A prey to robbers and to rust.
Christ, through his poor, a claim doth make ;
Give gladly, for thy Saviour's sake.

Give books : they live when you are dead ;
Light on the darken'd mind they shed :
Good seed they sow, from age to age,
Through all this mortal pilgrimage.
They nurse the germs of holy trust ;
They wake untired when you are dust.

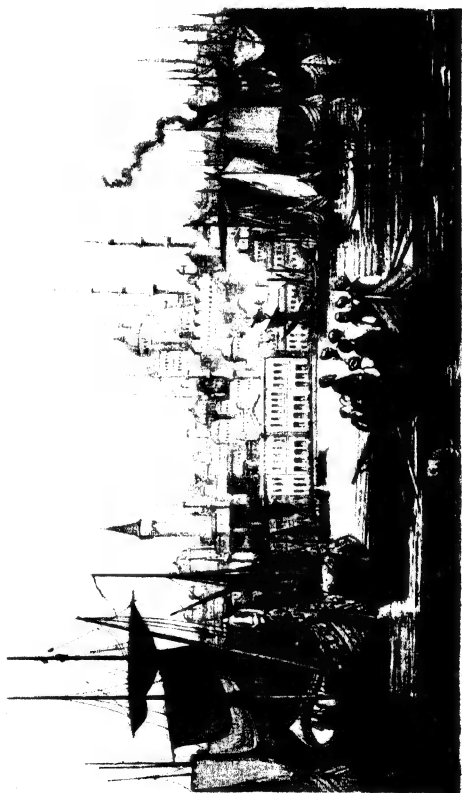
Give smiles, to cheer the little child,
A stranger on this thorny wild ;
It bringeth love, its guard to be—
It, helpless, asketh love from thee.

Howe'er by fortune's gifts unblest'd,
Give smiles to childhood's guileless breast.

Give words, kind words, to those who err ;
Remorse doth need a comforter.
Though in temptation's wiles they fall,
Condemn not—we are sinners all.
With the sweet charity of speech,
Give words that heal, and words that teach.

Give thought, give energy, to themes
That perish not like folly's dreams.
Hark ! from the islands of the sea,
The missionary cries to thee :
To aid him on a heathen soil,
Give thought, give energy, give toil.

MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.



THE CITY OF THE SULTAN.

CONSTANTINOPLE, or "the City of Constantine," is the capital of the Ottoman empire. It stands on the west end of the narrow channel of the Bosphorus, which connects the sea of Marmora with the Euxine, or Black Sea. It is the Byzantium of the ancients, and the Stamboul of the modern Turks.

The situation of this city entitles it to be regarded as one of the most picturesque spots in the world. Its founders built it on a number of hills, which gives to the buildings the appearance of standing on a succession of terraces. When approached from the sea, it excites the most unbounded admiration. M. Lamartine declares, that nature and art have here combined to form one of the most interesting spectacles which the eye can behold. "I uttered," says he, "an involuntary cry when the magnificent panorama opened upon my sight. I forgot for ever the Bay of Naples and all its enchantments: to compare anything with this marvellous and graceful combination, would be an injustice to the fairest work of creation."

The far-famed Golden Horn is its harbour, in which steamers and native craft give to the scene an animated appearance; while light caïques, or passage-boats, bearing their turbaned passengers, are continually skimming over the surface of the blue and limpid waters. When

viewed from the deck of a vessel, a variety of beautiful objects rise on the view. Here are minarets of mosques and domes of bazaars, and there the turrets of towers and the walls of khans. On the highest terrace is the palace of the Sultan, the gilded cupolas of which peep above the lofty summits of plane and cypress-trees, the lower pavilions of the royal building being enshrouded by a shrubbery of orange, fig, and other choice and beautiful trees.

The most remarkable building in Constantinople is the mosque of St. Sophia, originally founded by Constantine, rebuilt by the emperor Justinian for Christian worship, but for ages appropriated to the service of Islamism. According to Von Hammer, "a hundred architects superintended its erection under Justinian. Five thousand masons worked on the right side and five thousand on the left. The mortar was made with barley-water, and the stones of the foundation were cemented with a mastic made of lime and barley-water. By the time the walls had been raised two yards above the ground, four hundred and fifty-two hundred-weight of gold had been expended. The magnificence and variety of the marble columns surpassed all bounds." Massive walls once surrounded the city; they are now in an impaired state through the lapse of ages. A bridge of boats connects Constantinople with Galata and Pera, on the opposite side of the Golden Horn, which now, indeed, form a part of this eastern metropolis.

However imposing the exterior of this city, the interior presents a perfect contrast, and offends the senses of all European visitors. The streets are

inconveniently narrow, steep, and dirty. Throughout the whole day a busy and confusing din is heard from the throng of Turks, Greeks, Armenians, and Franks, who push their trades in these thoroughfares. Here are crowds of itinerant vendors of fruit, and all sorts of wares—porters with heavy burdens making their way along the defile, donkeys with loaded panniers, and an occasional camel quietly bearing the produce of Arabia or Syria to the bazaars. Innumerable dogs, which own no man as master, prowl about in search of food, and not a little inconvenience the progress of the passengers, who in picturesque costume are on their way to the mosques.

A recent visitor states :—"Next to the mosques and the minarets, the fountains are decidedly the most beautiful features in Constantinople. They are very numerous, water being an object of the first importance with a people who drink, or are supposed to drink, no other beverage, and who are, moreover, perpetually washing themselves from morning to night. Many of the fountains, particularly those attached to the seraglio and the mosques, are stately covered structures, with curious gratings at the sides, and wide-spreading roofs to shade from the sun. Collected around these fountains, all day long, are to be seen picturesque groups of people, male and female, drawing water, or performing their ablutions previous to entering the mosques."

RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS PEOPLE.

"I AM glad to see you, Elizabeth," said Mary Sandford, as the young lady whom she addressed entered her sick room. The invalid made a feeble effort as she spoke to rise from the sofa on which she was reclining; holding out her hand to her visitor, and adding, with a smile of welcome, "but why have I not seen you sooner?"

"Dear Miss Sandford," replied Elizabeth, "I would have been here long since, if I had thought it would have given you any pleasure to see me."

"And why did you not think it, my dear?"

"Well, I do not know, only it never occurred to me that *you* could care to see *me*."

"Indeed! although I was your mother's most intimate friend, and had known and loved you from your infancy; you must have had some particular reason for thinking I would not care to see you; had I given you any?"

"Oh no, indeed, Miss Sandford, you had not; and I had no particular reason; only"—hesitating a little—"we are so very unlike."

"Well, perhaps we are; indeed, I may say I know we are in many things; for instance, I am old and ugly, and you are young and handsome—I am sick and—"

"Oh, but I do not mean anything like that,"

interrupted Elizabeth, though evidently not displeased at the flattering contrast which had been drawn.

"And what *do* you mean, Elizabeth? It strikes me that people may be very unlike in a variety of things, far more important than those I have mentioned, and yet be very intimate. I have many friends whom I love dearly, and in whose society I delight, yet they are very unlike myself."

"Yes, in taste and temper, perhaps," observed Elizabeth, "but not in—in—in other things."

"What other things, dear? we shall never understand one another if you do not speak more definitely. What other things?"

"Religion, for example," said Elizabeth, impatiently, vexed at being compelled to speak plainly.

"You are mistaken there, too," replied Miss Sandford, "there are many whom I differ from in religion, whom yet I love, esteem, and venerate. There is an old woman who often comes to see me when I am at home, and I cannot tell you how we enjoy each other's company, notwithstanding that she and I hold very opposite views on many points connected with religion. It is true there are others on which we agree, and these are the most important. But how do you and I differ about religion?"

"I do not mean to tell you that," answered Elizabeth.

"Shall I guess?"

"Indeed you may," she replied, half carelessly, half confidently; "you never can know unless I tell you."

"You think," said Miss Sandford, gravely, "that religion is all a pretence, and that religious people are all hypocrites. Have I guessed right?"

Elizabeth hung down her head,—she was too truthful to say “no,” and she had not boldness to say “yes.”

“And so that is your opinion, Elizabeth—you dare not acknowledge it, but you think that the Bible is a lie.”

Elizabeth started; “No, I do not think *that*,” she answered.

“But, my dear, it is the only rational ground on which you can refuse to embrace religion yourself,” said Miss Sandford; “and you tacitly admit that you have not embraced it. If every soul who has professed Christianity from the coming of Christ to this day, were only deceiving or self-deceived, that will not excuse you for rejecting it if the Bible be true. Their being condemned for hypocrisy will not prevent your being condemned for unbelief.” After a pause she inquired, “But how will you undertake to prove that all religious people are hypocrites?”

“Oh, I do not want to prove it, I am sure,” replied Elizabeth, rather at a loss; “only I do not see that they are any better than myself, or others who make no fuss about religion.”

“What do you mean by a ‘fuss?’”

The young lady tried to laugh off the question. “Now you know very well what I mean, Miss Sandford.”

“Well, perhaps I do; so, taking that point for granted, I will say, that some persons have what you would call a *fussy* manner in everything in which they engage,—it is their nature: others have naturally a quiet manner in all their transactions. Now these several parties carry each their own nature and peculiar manner

into their religious doings ; but religion is just the same solemnly and eternally important subject in the one case as in the other."

"But that is not what I mean," said Elizabeth, "or rather, I mean a great deal more than that; some people talk so much about religion, and religious societies, and religious meetings, and religious books, and evangelical preachers; and whatever you say, or do, or are going to do, they have always some text about it; and they are continually running about from school to school, and from meeting to meeting, and from preacher to preacher—and each of them has a pet preacher; and they are always comparing one with another, and sometimes they quarrel about which is the best. They call that religion, I call it fuss; and I am sure it is very tiresome."

"Well, if all that the persons you describe intend to accomplish by this sort, is the making a fuss, hearing, and talking, and being talked about, I could hardly blame you for thinking it very tiresome, nor for saying that you do not see they are any better than yourself. But the 'root of the matter' may possibly be in them, though the branches are permitted to run wild, and the fruit may be a little sour. We must remember, too, that we are all prone to talk most of what most occupies our affections:—'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.' The man who values money supremely, is always talking of it, or of how he may acquire it. So of the man whose idol is pleasure, so of the literary man, so of every one. Have you not observed this yourself?"

Elizabeth answered in the affirmative.

"I remember when I was a girl," continued Miss Sandford, "and very fond of pleasure, that whenever I was looking forward to a ball or a play, or some other amusement of a similar character, I could talk of nothing else with any satisfaction, until the time arrived. Is it any wonder if those who look forward to a happy eternity, who have its enjoyments in their hearts, should have them often on their lips? At the same time, I am neither advocating nor defending an awkward or ostentatious mode of introducing religion, which some one calls, 'bringing it in by the head and shoulders;' it is, to say the least of it, in very bad taste. Perhaps, however, when you and I shall at the last day meet those who have so erred, we shall discover that the error of the judgment arose from the overflowing of the heart."

"But what would you say if you saw worse than this?" inquired Elizabeth; "for I have observed that those who talk a great deal about religion, and can quote texts as fluently as possible, are often very ill-tempered, censorious, and meddling, and full of pride and self-conceit; so that I am afraid," she added, flip-pantly, "if their hearts are overflowing with anything, it is with envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. Now I am sure that is not religion."

"Indeed it is not," replied Miss Sandford; "and therefore religion ought not to be condemned, for what it has no connexion with. Those who reject Christianity because its professors are imperfect, would act a wiser part were they to endeavour to exhibit in their own characters what true religion is; especially when they are so capable of appreciating its intrinsic excel-

lence, of showing what it is, or rather what it is *not*, as you seem to be. But, alas; there are multitudes who can admire virtue in the abstract, can declare that were it embodied on earth, all men would fall down and adore it, and who yet, with the strangest perversity, can reject Christ, in whom every virtue included in piety toward God, and charity toward man, shone with absolutely unclouded lustre."

No reply being offered to these observations, Miss Sandford proceeded, "But are you sure, Elizabeth, that you are yourself free from the uncharitableness which you so liberally ascribe to others? I do not ask you to answer this question, but to meditate upon it and to listen impartially to what your conscience may testify in reply. You have evidently imbibed a very strong prejudice against those whom you term religious people, and it is an inquiry worth making, whether the prejudice is against the people, or against the religion. You have certainly been peculiarly unfortunate, if you have never met with a professor of Christianity who adorned the gospel, by a general, though of course, not a universal consistency of conduct and temper."

"Well, I am afraid I have been so unfortunate then, Miss Sandford, if it be a misfortune."

"What do you say to your mother?—She is well-informed, pleasing in her manners, refined in her taste, amiable in her temper, benevolent in her disposition—"

"We never talk of our relations," interrupted Elizabeth, tossing her head.

"Now that is hypocrisy on your part, Elizabeth. I know you both love and respect your mother, though

you are not always as tractable under her gentle rule as you ought to be. But, dear girl, the question to which I would bring you, namely, your own individual interest in the subject of religion, is one which must be considered quite apart from the character and doings of Christians. Your duty does not, in the slightest degree, depend upon their consistency. Still, I would not willingly allow you to lay it down as a rule, that Christianity either makes or leaves any one so unamiable as you seem to consider the religious people of your little world. I call it a *little* world, because I do not think you have had any opportunity of judging on a large scale. Broad as your judgment is, your ability to judge fairly is narrow enough."

Elizabeth murmured a scarcely audible reply to the effect that she did not wish it to be any wider; she had vulgar people enough among her acquaintance already.

"By which, if I hear you right, you would imply that all religious people are vulgar. Does religion make them so?"

"It does not make them not so," replied Elizabeth, sharply, annoyed at having her own folly exposed, yet determined, like many under similar circumstances, not to yield the point in debate; "and, indeed, I would not say but that it made them so, in some measure; it brings people into such low company, mixing up all ranks as if they were on an equality."

"Religion is not the only thing that does that, my dear; works of benevolence do the same—for example, your kindness in teaching fancy work brings you into frequent association with twenty or thirty poor girls

of the lowest rank ; is this association making you vulgar ? ”

“ We talk of nothing but the work,” answered Elizabeth ; “ I take care to allow nothing else.”

“ And suppose you cared enough for something of far higher importance, to seize the opportunity the work afforded you, and to speak sometimes to your pupils on *that*,—would there be danger of your becoming vulgar then ? ”

Receiving no answer, Miss Sandford went on : “ You ought to be better prepared to defend your positions, Elizabeth ; the truth is, the more exalted the subject on which we converse with *the vulgar*, the smaller the probability of our becoming vulgar like them. But who are the vulgar ? ”

“ Oh, I am sure, Miss Sandford, I could not answer that to your satisfaction ; but I think they are such as are without refinement ; of low and coarse habits, and minds and manners.”

“ Well, I think your definition is tolerably correct, so far as it goes ; and we need not, at present, pursue the inquiry further. Now it seems generally assumed, that the term vulgar applies only to those we call *the common people* : but taking your view of vulgarity, a duchess may be as vulgar as a kitchen-maid, and we may often find in a peasant such true gentility—that is, delicacy of feeling, dignity of mind, and propriety of manners—as would adorn a palace. Vulgarity is confined to no class, and wherever it exists, and whatever be its nature, it is something that religion may eradicate or soften away, but never, never gives.”

“ But surely you will admit that it is most frequently

found among the lower orders, and that it is not desirable, especially for young persons, to be much in such society?"

"Perhaps I might make such an admission, had it anything to do with the subject under consideration; but as that is not the case, we will not enter on the question. That which lies before us is, whether there is a larger proportion of vulgar people among those who are considered religious, than among those who are avowedly not religious. Now, still adopting your view of vulgarity, I have no doubt that the result of the inquiry will be found in favour of the former class. Suffer me also to make one remark in connexion with this question: allowing for the disproportion in numbers, open contempt and rejection of religion seems more frequent among the higher than among the lower classes; and wherever found, religion is by the irreligious often identified with coarseness of mind; especially when it appears in young females."

The deepening colour on the cheek of Elizabeth showed that she felt and applied the remark, though she said nothing.

"Indeed, dear Elizabeth," continued Miss Sandford, "this charge is too puerile to be argued against; it should only be denied. Christianity leaves people in some respects as it finds them. It visits one in the midst of his low associations and servile employments, and another surrounded by all the luxuries and refinements of polished society. It gives them one common interest, one common enjoyment, which they did not possess before, on which they can hold profitable and delightful communion, notwithstanding difference of

station, and without either of them quitting, or wishing to quit, the sphere he had previously occupied, or adopting tastes and manners which would unfit him for its duties. We do not send people to the Bible to learn manners; still, I believe that wherever it is valued and studied as it ought to be—in other words, wherever the power of true religion is experienced, it does soften the heart, and even to a considerable extent polish the manners.”

“I have never seen it, I am sorry to say,” replied Elizabeth, “and at any rate,” shifting her ground from the position she could no longer maintain, “that was the least item in the charge I brought forward.”

“True; if I remember right, it was ill-tempered, censorious meddling, etc. Elizabeth, you had discoloured glasses on when you drew such an unpleasing picture.”

“Oh, really no, Miss Sandford, I said nothing but what I have heard and seen more than a hundred times.”

“Suppose we grant that, there are other things you have not seen nor heard. You have not seen the internal struggle against the rising evil, up to the very moment of transgression. You have not seen the sincere repentance, the deep self-aborrence after it was past; you have not seen the tears that were shed over it in secret, when the delinquent had entered into the closet and shut the door; you have not heard the out-pouring of the penitential prayer, the groanings that could not be uttered in words, the breathings of a broken and contrite spirit.”

“But would it not make people rest quite satisfied

with their bad tempers and other faults," answered Elizabeth, "if a few prayers and tears would atone for them?"

"Mind, I said nothing about *atoning* for them; that is your own interpretation of my words; it is the very fact that they are already atoned for by the sympathising High-Priest, into whose ear the prayer is uttered, and before whose eyes the tear is shed, that gives bitterness to the remaining bondage of sin, and makes the transgressors pant for deliverance. It was this that made David, who in the spirit of prophecy rested on the yet unaccomplished sacrifice of Christ, exclaim, 'Mine iniquities are gone over my head: as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.' It was this that made Paul cry out, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' I remember to have heard an excellent clergyman remark, that while the world ridiculed the notion of sudden conversion, it yet seemed to require from Christians, so soon as they professed religion, an entire freedom from every evil principle and practice; a perfection not merely human but angelic; and when it did not find in them what the Bible gave no warrant to expect, it set all professors down as hypocrites. Now, is this fair? The Bible represents God's most devoted servants as carrying on an unceasing struggle against evil, within as well as without them; longing and praying for the time, when by Divine grace the conquest over every sin shall be complete. This is the true difference between the Christian and the empty professor; the former feels the evil of sin *as sin*,—as a transgression of God's law, as hateful in his sight, as a dishonour to his

name. To such a one, therefore, it is a burden from which he longs to be delivered; a grievous yoke from which he prays to be set free; a daily spring of bitterness mingling itself with everything that belongs to his history, save only the unalloyed sweetness of the love of God in the gift of his dear Son. I cannot consider any one a hypocrite, however great and numerous his faults, if I know that they are his burden, and that they make him more hateful in his own sight than he can be in the sight of others."

"But I cannot think," replied Elizabeth, "that it is becoming in those who are still subject to many imperfections themselves, to be so ready to judge with severity the conduct of others, as religious people generally are. Besides, it is very easy for those who have no taste for amusements, or who are too old to enjoy them, to denounce every innocent recreation, as if to be merry were a terrible sin. It is a very cheap and easy way of being religious."

"This is just the old theme, my dear,—perfection, absolute perfection;—what we have never found, what we never shall find either in ourselves or others, till we behold it in heaven. Why, if we are to wait till this dream of ours is realized, we shall never have any instructors. The parent must give up teaching his children, the minister his flock, the Sunday-school teacher his class, nay, the very schoolmaster must dismiss his pupils, for it is almost certain that what he teaches others, he does not know perfectly himself. You said something of 'innocent recreations;' now what if there are those who do not think the recreations to which you refer innocent? The Bible contains a

universal rule of conduct, and if they see you doing, or about to do, what the Bible in spirit if not in the letter forbids, it would be very mistaken kindness in them to leave you without warning."

"One person is as well able to judge what is right as another."

"Not those who reject the rule, assuredly. You cannot mean to say that our inclinations are to be our rule? If so, the child is right who chooses to surfeit himself with sugar-plums and cakes, and the parent is wrong who takes from him the means of destroying his health. But come now, Elizabeth, be honest, and confess that your quarrel against religious people (an ambiguous term by the way) arises simply from this—they do not approve of your favourite pursuits, and they tell you so."

"And why should they interfere with what only concerns myself?" answered Elizabeth, in rather an excited tone. "What right have they to endeavour to deprive me of that which gives me pleasure? I mean, those who have no authority over me?"

"They may do it for two reasons; first, because they are assured that what you now fancy gives you pleasure will end in disappointment or in worse; and secondly, because they know that it prevents you from embracing *that*, which, once embraced, would satisfy your utmost desires. Are not these good and sufficient reasons?"

Elizabeth bent her head over the netting about which she had been engaged since she entered the apartment, and seemed inclined, so far as she herself was concerned, to let the subject drop. She would have quitted the

room, could she have done so without being guilty of positive rudeness towards her mother's invalid guest: but, however apparently absorbed in her work, she could not prevent herself from hearing nor from occasionally replying to the remarks which from time to time Miss Sandford addressed to her.

"You are young, Elizabeth dear, and I do not forget that I was once young myself. I can make much allowance for the faults of untamed youth, even for a little deficiency in that courtesy which should be yielded to years, if not justly due to character. But, oh! remember, youth will not last always; nor is it, while it does last, a pathway strewn with thornless roses, leading through a region of unclouded skies. 'Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward;' and be assured the time will come, sooner or later, when you will need as a refuge the religion you now despise."

"But you quite mistake me, Miss Sandford, I do not despise religion; I have not said a word against religion—only against religious people."

"Is there any difference?"

"Yes, I think there is, when *they* are not what they ought to be."

"In other words, when religious people are not religious people."

"You confuse me, Miss Sandford," cried Elizabeth, evidently much discomposed.

"Nay, my dear, you confuse yourself, by using terms which do not properly apply. Do you not perceive that if those you speak of are what you describe them to be, without even the grace of being sorry for their sins,

they cannot in reality be religious at all? If, on the other hand, you believe them to have some redeeming qualities, which may entitle them to such a character, —then in despising them, *as such*, you are most certainly despising religion.”

Elizabeth plied her netting implements with wonderful assiduity for five minutes, and then broke silence.

“Miss Sanford, you said awhile ago, that the term ‘religious people’ was an ambiguous one; I do not quite understand your meaning.”

“My meaning is, that it is frequently used when nothing more is intended to be expressed, than the outward semblance of religion,—‘the form of godliness;’ I do not mean to say that in the cases thus spoken of ‘the power’ of godliness does not exist, but that the speakers take no account of anything but the external tokens. Let a person be very regular in attendance on public worship, in family and private devotion, very strict in the observance of the sabbath and in separation from the gaieties of the world, you will hear their acquaintance say, ‘He (or *she*) is very religious;’ and probably it is true, but not according to *their* notions; what they speak of are but the signs of religion, not religion itself. There are, however, multitudes so ignorant as to believe that religion is nothing more than a round of outward observances, and who would laugh, or at least stare at you, were you to declare it to be an inward principle implanted in the heart by Divine grace, without which no observances, moral or religious, can be accepted in the sight of God. It is this confounding the sign with the thing signified that lowers the character of religion with a careless world.”

“And what term would you use, if you object to this?”

“I would say ‘Christians’; it reminds us of Him whose image we ought to bear. There is a grievous mistake,” continued Miss Sandford, “which many fall into. They speak of religion as if it were a matter they might choose or refuse at pleasure. I have heard persons say in vindication of some doubtful line of conduct, ‘Oh! but you know *I* make no profession of religion!’ and this with as much cool indifference, as much quiet self-complacency, as if they were only saying, ‘Oh, but you know I have no taste for music!’ —Now were they to reflect for a moment on what religion is, they would perceive it is something the obligation to which is not so easily got rid of. Will you tell me, Elizabeth, what this principle called religion is?”

Elizabeth coloured, tried to answer, stammered, looked foolish, and at last said, she would rather hear Miss Sandford herself define it.

“It has been defined long since, my dear,” replied Miss Sandford, “in language equally simple and comprehensive, and by wisdom far superior to mine. ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.’ That is religion.”

“Oh, but no one has ever attained to that.”

“Multitudes have aimed at it,—have ‘pressed toward’ it,—have felt happier the nearer they approached it,—have condemned themselves for not reaching it,—have died rejoicing in the hope of speedily possessing it: ‘I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.’

Besides, consider :—‘ God is a perfect Being, He cannot give his creatures an imperfect rule ; in doing so He would deny the perfection of his own character.’ Consider again :—Perfect though the rule be, it contains no more than our own consciences tell us is due from us to God in consequence of the relation in which we stand to Him. Strange that any should acknowledge the relationship, and yet imagine themselves at liberty to refuse to serve Him. Men believe that God made them ; they believe that He did not make them like the beasts that perish ; that He did not make them like the butterfly, that sports for a few summer days among the flowers, and then is gone for ever. They believe that He made them rational and immortal souls, capable of tracing the Hand from which they came, and of rendering back a willing, a grateful, and an affectionate obedience : they can acknowledge this, and yet deny their obligation to consecrate to Him the existence He gave, and which owes all its enjoyment to his unfailing bounty. Now it is quite evident that we cannot escape from the obligation to embrace religion, until we can escape from the relation our creation has established between us and our Creator. But from that relationship we cannot escape : it will follow us through life, it will be with us at death, it will confront us at the judgment-seat, it will pursue us through eternity, enhancing the blessedness of the blessed and the misery of the lost. Oh, ‘ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God : ’ the more fearful from the abundance of that mercy through which He now ‘ waiteth to be gracious.’ ”

Miss Sandford understood well the character of the

young person on whose mind she was endeavouring to work. She knew that notwithstanding the levity and even rudeness of some of her remarks and replies, notwithstanding her apparent recklessness of every sacred obligation, she had a conscience and a heart. She knew also that despite the folly of her arguments, she was not a simpleton. Pleading on the side on which her affections still held her, to talk sense was an impossibility; yet Miss Sandford thought, that although the wise men of this world might put forward their objections to Christianity in more polished language, in more elegantly rounded periods, and supported by more logical arguments, there was just as much sound wisdom in the reasoning of Elizabeth.

A pause of a minute or two followed her last remark, when she suddenly inquired, "Elizabeth, had you ever the toothache?"

"The toothache! why, what an extraordinary question to ask me just now, Miss Sandford!"

"It is one easily answered, at all events, my dear"

"Well, I have; and what then?"

"Is it a very severe pain?"

"Oh, terrible indeed. Had you never the toothache, Miss Sandford?"

"Yes, often; but I am not going to speak of that now. I want to know what you think of it; how did you amuse yourself when you had it?"

"Amuse myself when I had the toothache! why, I could enjoy nothing. I was in London at the time, and dying to visit the Italian Opera; and the very morning the toothache came on, a lady brought me a ticket—and I in such pain! I declare I could have

torn it in fragments, and trampled them under foot before her face."

"That would have been a very ungrateful return for her kindness. And I suppose you did not go to the Opera."

"How could I go, Miss Sandford, in such violent pain?"

"Might it not have made you forget your pain?"

"No, indeed, it never could; I could think of nothing else. As for the Opera, I hated the thoughts of it, and I hated every one that was going to it, and above all I hated the lady that brought me the ticket for it."

"And so your favourite amusement had no power to yield you a moment's comfort under a fit of the toothache!" observed Miss Sandford quietly.

Elizabeth appeared confounded at the use which was being made of her voluntary confessions; but before she had time to reply, her friend proceeded: "I mentioned the toothache, because I thought it was in all probability the only severe pain you had ever experienced. But there are severe pains besides the toothache; pains far more hopeless of relief; pains from which the subject of them can look for no release, until death shall put an end to every earthly affliction. Elizabeth, I have witnessed such pains, and I have seen them attended with such peace—such peace as the world can neither give nor take away! You have seen Miss Godfrey, and you know that she was for years suffering under some mysterious disease which baffled the skill of the physicians to discover, to remove, or even in any considerable degree to alleviate; but you do not

know that under all her protracted sufferings she possessed a calm and quiet sense of happiness which nothing earthly could disturb. The last time I saw her, the poor frame was giving way, the distressing restlessness of approaching death was stealing over her, and the memory of earthly things and of earthly friends was becoming clouded: she did not know me. I had no need to ask, 'Miss Godfrey, how is it with your body?' for I saw that the clay tabernacle was dissolving; but when I inquired, 'Miss Godfrey, how is it with your mind?' she pressed her feeble hands together with such a look! as, raising her eyes upward, she faltered the reply, 'Oh, it is peace, peace—all peace, through Jesus!' Elizabeth, you will die—you *must* die; have you any doubt of that?"

Elizabeth became quite pale, but answered firmly, "No."

"I am not going to remind you," continued Miss Sandford, "that you *may* die to-night, to-morrow, next week, next year: the longest life on earth is so short, when compared with eternity, that this moment, or a hundred years hence, seem the same thing. But some time or other YOU ARE TO DIE. Now, what are your views, your expectations with regard to death? You know that it must separate you from all that surrounds you here; but what will it introduce you to? Have you ever thought of that? and that there may be a need for a far other state of mind and feeling and desire than what you cherish now, in order that you may be ready for the inevitable event? Everything will look very different, on its approach, from what it does while you are in the flush of youth and health and

spirits. Are you sure that you will still be able to say 'Religion is a pretence, religious people are hypocrites : of this I am so well convinced that I am satisfied to enter eternity without religion ?' "

Elizabeth covered her face with her hands, and burst into tears. Miss Sandford allowed her to vent her feelings, whether they were those of conviction or of passion, for a while without interruption ; and then said, " A moment's reflection will assure you, Elizabeth, that it is not my intention nor my wish to make you unhappy. If it were certain that by indulging in some gratification of an hour to-day, you would make yourself completely miserable through the whole of the ensuing year, you would at once admit that it was kindness to urge you to renounce the gratification. But what is a year of mortal existence, though you went every moment of its progress 'in the bitterness of your soul,' compared with an unchanging eternity of misery ?

" You have this day, dear girl, made an admission, on which I can found an appeal to your conscience in favour of that religion you have hitherto refused : you have said you do *not* believe the Bible to be a lie. If it be not a lie then it must be truth ; and if it be truth, it is truth of a character so interesting, yet so tremendously awful, that it is madness to remain for one moment in a state of wilful indifference regarding it. What does the Bible say to you ? It tells you that you are a **SINNER**—a rebel against the God who made you—against a Being of infinite power and purity and wisdom and truth and justice : it tells you of the infinite danger of continuing unreconciled to such a Being : it tells you that the way of reconciliation has

been provided by himself; that when there was no man that could 'redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom' for a soul, He sent his only-begotten Son to die for your iniquity, and that of every inhabitant of a guilty world: it tells you that there is pardon and cleansing in the blood of Jesus, purity and peace in the new-creating power of the Holy Spirit; that there are new affections, new desires, new hopes, new enjoyments, consequent upon your acceptance of these blessings; and that all and each of them makes a demand upon your gratitude and love, and urges you to devote yourself to Him who purchased them for you with his sufferings and death. The Bible tells you all this, and you say you believe the Bible to be true.

"And now, my Elizabeth," said Miss Sandford, looking at her watch, "the hour and my feebleness warn me that our conversation must come to a close. Yet I cannot allow you to go without entreating you, in the words of the apostle Paul, to 'think on these things.' I would also say, whenever you hear started an objection against Christianity founded on the character of its professors, suffer not your good sense to be confounded by an argument that even a child well read in the Scriptures could answer. Think what an absurdity you would be guilty of, were you to refuse coin from the royal mint because you had detected some persons endeavouring to pass counterfeits; but greater still would be your absurdity, if for the same reason you were to reject the pure and priceless gold fresh from the mine. You understand me?"

"Yes," answered Elizabeth, in a low and subdued tone; "the mine is the Bible."

“True, Elizabeth, the mine is the Bible; and reverse, if you will, the order of the words, it will still hold true, **THE BIBLE IS THE MINE**—not merely *a* mine, but by pre-eminence **THE mine**. In it are ‘hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,’—‘the unsearchable riches of Christ.’ Talk of the mines of Potosi, of the golden sands of Guinea, of the gems of Golconda, of the untold wealth which lies open in the soil of California! but here is **THE MINE**—here is the treasure that will fully satisfy the soul in time, and remain unexhausted through a happy eternity.”

THE SEASON OF PERIL.

"In all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, Good Lord, deliver us !"

WHEN fearful storms our trembling barque assail,
And rough and perilous its transit seems,
When human sympathy and succour fail,
And hope's soft light withdraws its cheering beams,
Good Lord, deliver us ! Calm the sad strife,
And guide us o'er the troublous waves of life.

When with light step we tread the flowery maze
Of earthly pleasure and prosperity,
Let not the gifts that mark our sunny days
Attract our love and confidence from thee ;
Good Lord, deliver us ! nor let us stray,
From thy sweet fold, and the safe narrow way.

And in the hour of death, when earthly scenes
Fade in remote perspective from our gaze ;
When the dark cloud heaven's prospect intervenes,
And memory each forgotten sin portrays,
Good Lord, deliver us ! Dispel our fear,
And let our Saviour's love the dark vale cheer.

And when we stand before the judgment throne,
The cross of Christ shall be our only plea,
For thou, O Saviour ! at that day wilt own
Those who, in this world, meekly follow'd thee ;
Good Lord, deliver us ! and be our stay,
"When rocks shall fall to dust, and mountains melt
away."

AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN SCENERY COMPARED.

EVERY intellectual being has a longing to see distant lands. We desire to ascertain, by actual observation, the peculiarities of nations, the differences which exist between the stranger and ourselves, and, as far as may be, all that lies beyond our daily experience. This feeling seems implanted in our nature, and few who possess the means of doing so, fail to gratify it. Every day increases the amount of the intercourse between the people of different countries; and the happiest results may be anticipated from this fusion of nations, and the humanizing influences which are its consequences. Those, however, who are forbidden by circumstances to extend their personal observations beyond the limits of their own homes, must be content to derive their information on such subjects from the pen, the pencil, and the graver.

The great distinction between American and European scenery, as a whole, is to be found in the greater want of finish in the former than in the latter; and in the greater abundance of works of art in the Old World than in the New. Nature has certainly made some differences, though there are large portions of continental Europe that, without their artificial accessories, might well pass for districts in America.



The prevalent characteristic of the English landscape is its air of snugness and comfort. In these respects it differs entirely from that of its neighbour, France. The English, no doubt, have a great deal of poverty among them; but it is kept surprisingly out of the ordinary view. Most of it, indeed, is to be found in the towns; and even in them it is concealed in out-of-the-way places and streets, seldom entered by the stranger.

There are places in America, more especially in the vicinities of the large towns, which have a strong resemblance to the more crowded portions of England, though the hedge is usually wanting, and the stone wall is more in favour than it appears ever to have been among their ancestors. The great abundance of wood, in that country, too, gives the rail and the board for fences, objects which the lovers of the picturesque would gladly see supplanted by the brier and the thorn. The neighbourhoods of most of the old towns in the northern states have more or less of the same character; it being natural that the descendants of Englishmen should have preserved as many of the usages of their forefathers as was practicable. We know of no portion of America which bears any marked resemblance to the prevalent characteristics of an ordinary French landscape. In France there are two great distinctive features, which seem to divide the materials of the views between them. One is that of a bald nakedness of formal *grandes routes*, systematically lined with trees, a total absence of farm-houses, fences, hedges, and walls, little or no forest, except in particular places, scarcely any pieces of detached woods,

and a husbandry that is remarkable for its stiffness and formality. The fields of a French acclivity, when the grain is ripe, or ripening, have a strong resemblance to an ordinary Manchester pattern-card, in which the different cloths, varying in colour, are placed under the eye at one glance. The effect of this is not pleasing, the lines being straight, and the fields exhibiting none of the freedom of nature. Stiffness and formality, indeed, impair the beauty of nine-tenths of the French landscapes, though, as a whole, the country is considered fine, and is certainly very productive. The other distinctive feature to which we allude is of a directly contrary character, being remarkable for the affluence of its objects. It often happens in France that the traveller finds himself on a height that commands a view of great extent, which is literally covered with *bourgs*, or small towns and villages. This occurs particularly in Normandy, in the vicinity of Paris, and as one approaches the Loire. In such places it is no unusual thing for the eye to embrace, as it might be in a single view, some forty or fifty cold, grave-looking, chiselled *bourgs* and villages, almost invariably erected in stone. The effect is not unpleasant, for the subdued colour of the buildings has a tendency to soften the landscape, and to render the whole solemn and imposing. We can recall many of these scenes that have left indelible impressions on the mind, and which, if not positively beautiful in a rural sense, are very remarkable. That from the heights of Montmorenci, near Paris, is one of them; and there is another, from the hill of St. Catharine, near Rouen, which is quite as extraordinary.

The greater natural freedom that exists in an ordinary American landscape, and the abundance of detached fragments of wood, often render the views of that country strikingly beautiful, when they are of sufficient extent to conceal the want of finish in the details, which requires time and long-continued labour to accomplish. In this particular the older portions of the United States offer to the eye a general outline of view that may well claim to be even of a higher cast than most of the scenery of the Old World.

There is one great charm, however, that it must be confessed is nearly wanting in the States. We allude to the coast. With scarcely an exception, it is low, monotonous, and tame. It wants alpine rocks, bold promontories, visible heights inland, and all those other glorious accessories of the sort which render the coast of the Mediterranean the wonder of the world. It is usual for the American to dilate on the size of his bays and rivers, but objects like these require corresponding elevation in the land. Admirable as is the bay of New York for the purposes of commerce, it holds but a very subordinate place as a landscape among the other havens of the world. The comparison with Naples which has so often been made, is singularly unjust, there not being two bays of any extent to be found that are really less alike than these. It was never our good fortune to see Constantinople or Rio de Janeiro, the two noblest and most remarkable scenes of this kind, as we have understood, known to the traveller. But we much question if either will endure the test of rigid and severe examination, better than the celebrated Gulf of Napoli. The colour of the water, alone, is a

peculiar beauty of all the Mediterranean bays: it is the blue of the deep sea, carried home to the very rocks of the coast. In this respect, the shores of America, also, have less claim to beauty than those of Europe generally. The waters are green, the certain sign of their being shallow. Similar tints prevail in the narrow seas between Holland and England. There are large districts in Holland which are actually below the level of the high tides of the sea. This country is a proof of how much time, civilization, and persevering industry, may add even to the interest of a landscape. While the tameness of the American coast has so little to relieve it or to give it character, in Holland it becomes the source of wonder and admiration. The sight of vast meadows, villages, farm-houses, churches, and other works of art, actually lying below the level of the adjacent canals and the neighbouring seas, wakes in the mind a species of reverence for human industry. This feeling becomes blended with the views, and it is scarcely possible to gaze upon a Dutch landscape without seeing, at the same time, ample pages from the history of the country and the character of its people. On the other side of the ocean there are no such peculiarities. Time, numbers, and labour, are yet wanting to supply the defects of nature, and they must there be content, for a while, with the less teeming pictures drawn in their youth and comparative simplicity.

In the way of the wild, the terrific, and the grand, nature is sufficient of herself; but Niagara is scarcely more imposing than she is now rendered lovely by the works of man. It is true that this celebrated cataract

has a marked sweetness of expression, if we may use such a term, which singularly softens its magnificence; and now that men are becoming more familiar with its mysteries, and penetrating into its very mists, by means of a small steamboat, the admirer of nature discovers a character different from that which first strikes the senses.

We regard it as hypercritical to speak of the want of alpine scenery around Niagara. On what scale must the mountains be moulded to bear a just comparison in this view of the matter with the grandeur of the cataract? The Alps, the Andes, and the Himalaya, would scarcely suffice to furnish materials necessary to produce the contrast, on any measurement now known to the world. In fact, the accessories, except as they are blended with the falls themselves, as in the wonderful gorge through which the river rushes in an almost fathomless torrent, as if frightened at its own terrific leap; the whirlpool, and all that properly belongs to the stream from the commencement of the rapids, or, to be more exact, from the placid, lake-like scenery above these rapids, down to the point where the waters of this mighty strait are poured into the bosom of the Ontario, strike us as being in singular harmony with the views of the cataract itself.

The Americans may well boast of their waterfalls, and of their lakes, notwithstanding the admitted superiority of Upper Italy and Switzerland in connexion with the highest classes of the latter. They form objects of interest over a vast surface of territory, and greatly relieve the monotony of the inland views. We do not now allude to the five great lakes, which resemble seas, and offer very much the same assemblage

of objects to the eye; but to those of greatly inferior extent, which are sparkling over so much of the surface of the northern states. The east, and New York in particular, abound in them, though farther west the lover of the picturesque must be content to receive the prairie in their stead. It would be a great mistake, however, to attempt to compare any of these lakes with the finest of the Old World, though many of them are very lovely, and all contribute to embellish the scenery. Lake George itself could not occupy more than a fourth or fifth position in a justly graduated scale of the lakes of Christendom; though certainly very charming to the eye, and of singular variety in its aspects. In one particular, indeed, this lake has scarcely an equal. We allude to its islands, which are said to equal the number of the days in the year. Points, promontories, and headlands, are scarcely ever substitutes for islands which add inexpressibly to the effect of all water-views.

Germany has, we think, in some respects, a strong resemblance to the views of America. It is not so much wanting in detached copses and smaller plantations of trees as the countries further south and east of it, while it has less of the naked aspect in general which is so remarkable in France. Detached buildings occur more frequently in Germany than in France especially, and, we might add, also in Spain. The reader will remember that it is a prevalent usage throughout Europe, with the exception of the British Islands, Holland, and here and there a province in other countries, for the rural population to dwell in villages. This practice gives to the German landscape in par-

ticular, a sort of resemblance to what is ordinarily termed park scenery, though it is necessarily wanting in much of that expression which characterises the embellishments that properly belong to the latter. In the United States this resemblance is often even stronger, in consequence of the careless graces of nature, and the great affluence of detached woods: the distinguishing features existing in the farm-house, fences, and out-buildings. On a cloudy day a distant view often bears this likeness to the park in a very marked degree, for then the graces of the scene are visible to the eye, while the defects of the details are too remote to be detected.

The mountain scenery of America, though wanting in grandeur, and in that wild sublimity which ordinarily belongs to a granite formation, is not without attractions that are singularly its own. The great abundance of forest, the arable qualities of the soil, and the peculiar blending of what may be termed the agricultural and the savage, unite to produce landscapes of extraordinary beauty and grace. Vast regions of country possessing this character are to be found in almost all the old states, for after quitting the coast for a greater or less distance, varying from one to two hundred miles, the ranges of the Alleghanies interpose between the monotonous districts of the Atlantic shores and the great plains of the west. We are of opinion, that as civilization advances, and the husbandman has brought his lands to the highest state of cultivation, there will be a line of mountain scenery extending from Maine to Georgia, in a north and south direction, and possessing a general width of from one to two hundred miles from

east to west, that will scarcely have a parallel in any other quarter of the world, in those sylvan upland landscapes, which, while they are wanting in the sublimity of the alpine regions, share so largely in the striking and effective.

It is usual for the American to boast of his rivers, not only for their size and usefulness, but for their beauties. A thousand streams, which in older regions would have been rendered memorable, ages since, by the poet, the painter, art in every form, and the events of a teeming history, flow within the limits of the United States, still unsung, and nearly unknown. As yet, something is ordinarily wanting in the way of *finish*, along the banks of these inferior watercourses. But occasionally in places where art has, as it might be, accidentally assisted nature, they come into the landscape with the most pleasing influence on its charms. In this respect, the peculiarity of the country is rather in a want of uniformity than in any want of material. It would seem that all the northern states of America, at least, are far better watered than common, and that consequently they possess more of this species of beauty. As for the great streams, the largest, perhaps, have the least claims to high character in this respect, in both the Old and the New World. The Rhine is an exception, however; for it would be difficult to find another river of equal length and with the same flow of water, that possesses the same diversity of character, or one so peculiar. At its source it descends from the high glaciers of the Alps, a number of brawling brooks, which, forcing their way through the upper valleys, unite below in a straggling, rapid, but shallow stream, that

finds its way into the lake of Constance, out of which it issues a compact rapid river, imposing by its volume of water rather than its breadth, or any other advantage. Its cataracts, so celebrated in the Old World, can scarcely claim to be the equal of the Cohoes, or many others of the secondary falls of America, though the Rhine has always an abundance of water, which the Mohawk has not. On quitting Switzerland, this remarkable stream assumes many aspects, and decorates, beyond a doubt, as much landscape scenery as falls to the share of any other stream in the known world. We do not think it, however, in its best parts, equal to the Hudson in its whole length, though the characters of these two rivers are so very different as scarcely to admit of a fair comparison. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the Rhine is its termination; for, after embellishing and serving the purposes of such an extent of country in the very heart of Europe, it disappears, so to speak, in a number of straggling, uninteresting, turbid waters, among the marshes of Holland. This is a very different exit from that which characterises the majestic flow of the Hudson to the Atlantic.

England has no great rivers to boast of, though she has a few of singular claims to notice, on account of the great flow of the tides and the vast amount of commerce which they bear on their bosom. The Thames, so renowned in history, is as uninteresting as possible, until it passes above the bridges of London, where it becomes an ordinarily pretty sylvan stream.

The Seine, another river familiar, in name at least, to every reader, has much higher claims than its neighbour of the British Islands, in the way of natural beauty.

This stream, from Rouen to the Channel, is not without some very fine scenery, as well as possessing a varying and interesting character, with both natural and artificial accessories, to say nothing of the historical, which draw largely on the attention.

Italy has many rivers that are celebrated in song or story, but not one, we think, which should rank high on the ground of landscape beauty. Most of her streams are so dependent on the melting of the snows in the Apennines and Alps, as to be either brawling torrents, or meagre straggling pools. The Arno, the Po, the Adige, the Tiber, and all the other rivers of that peninsula, are liable to these objections. Even the Tiber, which is navigable as high as Rome for vessels of a light draft, is either a tranquil thread, or one of those noisy turbid streams that overflow their banks, and often appear at a loss to know in which direction to pour their waters.

New York, in the way of scenery, has very high claims to variety, gracefulness, and even grandeur among the mountains of the counties bordering on Champlain.* The term grandeur, however, must not be received in any other than a limited sense. Any well delineated view of a high-class Swiss scene, must at once convince even the most provincial mind among us that nothing of the sort is to be found in America, east of the Rocky Mountains. Nevertheless, the Adirondack has claims to a wild grandeur, which,

* Our view of New York from Staten Island is one of a very striking character. Its outspreading range of highlands—the noble mountain Shawangunk, the magnificent bay and distant city, together with the intervening villages and villas, combine to form a picture of unusual loveliness and grandeur.

If it do not approach magnificence, is of a character to impress a region with the seal of a very noble nature. The lovers of the picturesque sustain a great loss by means of the numerous lines of railroads which have recently come into existence. This is true of both Europe and America. In the course of time, it will be found that everywhere a country presents its best face towards its thoroughfares. Every thing that depends on art, naturally takes this aspect, for men are as likely to 'put on their best appearance along a wayside in the country, as on the streets of a town. All that has been done, therefore, in past ages, in these particulars, is being deranged, and in some instances deformed, by the necessity of preserving levels, and avoiding the more valuable portions of a country, in order to diminish expense. Thus villages and towns are no longer entered by their finest passages, producing the best effects; but the traveller is apt to find his view limited by ranges of sheds, out-houses, and other deformities of that nature. Here and there, some work of art, compelled by necessity, furnishes a relief to this deformity. But on the whole, the recent system of railroads has as yet done very little towards adding to the picturesque for the benefit of the traveller. The graceful winding curvatures of the old highways, the acclivities and declivities, the copses, meadows, and woods, the half-hidden church nestling among the leaves of its elms and pines, the neat and secluded hamlet, the farm-house with all its comforts and sober arrangements, so disposed as to greet the eye of the passenger, will long be hopelessly looked for by him who flies through these scenes, which, like a

picture placed in a false light, no longer reflect the genius and skill of the artist.

The Old World enjoys an advantage as regards the picturesque and pleasing, in connexion with its towns, that is wholly unknown, unless it may be in the way of exception, in the New World. The necessity, in the middle ages, of building for defence, and the absence of artillery before the invention of gunpowder, contributed to the construction of military works for the protection of the towns of Europe, which still remain, owing to their durable materials, often producing some of the finest effects that the imagination could invent to embellish a picture. We mention one or two that are to be met with in the Apennines and the Alps, and even in Germany, as proofs of what we say. The eye, of itself, will teach the reader that Richmond, and Boston, and Washington, and Baltimore, and half a dozen other American towns that do possess more or less of an unequal surface, must yield the palm to those gloriously beautiful objects of the Old World. When it is remembered, too, how much time has multiplied these last, it can be seen that there are large districts in the mountain regions of Europe, that enjoy this superiority over the other hemisphere, if superiority it can be called, to possess the picturesque at the expense of the convenient. The imagination can scarcely equal the pictures of this nature which often meet the eye in the southern countries of the continent of Europe. Villages with the phiseled outlines of castles—grey, sombre, but distinct—are often seen perched on the summits of rocky heights, or adhering, as it might be said, to their sides, in situations that are frequently even appalling,

and which invariably lend a character of peculiar beauty to the view. There are parts in which the traveller encounters these objects in great numbers, and if an American, they never fail to attract his attention, as the wigwam, and the bark canoe, and the prairie with lines of bisons, would catch the eye of a wayfarer from the Old World. To these humbler mountain pictures must be added many a castle and stronghold of royal or semi-royal origin, which are met with on the summits of abrupt and rocky eminences farther north. Germany has many of these strongholds, which are kept up to the present day, and which are found to be useful as places of security, as they are certainly peculiar and interesting in the landscape.

To conclude : we concede to Europe much the noblest scenery in its Alps, Pyrenees, and Apennines ; in its objects of art, as a matter of course ; in all those effects which depend on time and association, in its monuments, and in this impress of the past which may be said to be reflected in its countenance ; while we claim for America the freshness of a most promising youth, and a species of natural radiance which carries the mind with reverence to the Source of all that is glorious around it.

THE BURMAN ZAYAT; OR, WAYSIDE PREACHING.

BY MRS. EMILY JUDSON.

THE sunlight fell aslant upon the fragile frame-work of a Burman zayat; but though it was some hours past mid-day, the burning rays were not yet level enough to look too intrusively beneath the low, projecting eaves. Yet the day was intensely hot, and the wearied occupant of the one bamboo chair in the centre of the building looked haggard and care-worn. All day long had he sat in that position, repeating over and over again, as he could find listeners, such simple truths as mothers are accustomed to teach the infant on their knee; and now his head was aching and his heart was very heavy. He had met some scoffers, some who seemed utterly indifferent, but not one sincere inquirer after truth.

In the middle of the day, when the sun was hottest, and scarcely a European throughout all India was astir, he had received the greatest number of visitors: for the passers-by were glad of a moment's rest and shelter from the sun. The mats were still spread invitingly upon the floor; but though persons of

almost every description were continually passing and repassing, they seemed each intent on his own business, and the missionary was without a listener. He thought of his neglected study-table at home, of his patient, fragile wife, toiling through the numerous cares of the day alone, of the letters his friends were expecting, and which he had no time to write, of the last periodicals from his dear native land, lying still unread; and every little while, between the other thoughts, came real pinings after a delicious little book of devotion, which he had slipped into his pocket in the morning, promising it his first moment of leisure. Then he was naturally an active man, of quick, ardent temperament, and with such views of the worth of time as earnest men can scarcely fail to gain; and it went to his heart to lose so many precious moments. If he could only do something to fill up these tedious intervals! But no; this was a work to which he must not give a divided mind. He was renewing a half-tested experiment in wayside preaching, and he would not suffer his attention to be distracted by anything else. While his face was hidden by his book, and his mind intent on self-improvement, some poor passer-by might lose a last, an only opportunity of hearing the words of life. To be sure, his own soul seemed very barren, and needed refreshing; and his body was weary—wearied well nigh to fainting, more with the dull, palsying inanity of the day's fruitless endeavours, than with anything like labour. Heavily beat down the hot sun, lighting up the amber-like brown of the thatch, as with a burning coal: while thickly in its broad rays floated a heavy golden cloud of dust and motes, showing in what an unhealthy atmosphere the delicate lungs were

called to labour. Meantime, a fever-freighted breeze, which had been, all the hot day, sweeping the effluvia from eastern marshes, stirred the glossy leaves of the orange-tree across the way, and parched the lip, and kindled a crimson spot upon the wan cheek of the weary missionary.

"God reigns," he repeated, as though some reminder of the sort were necessary. "God Almighty reigns; and I have given myself to Him, soul and body, for time and for eternity. His will be done!" Still, how long the day seemed! How broad the space that blistering sun had yet to travel, before its waiting, its watching, and its labouring would be ended! Might he not indulge himself just one moment? His hand went to his pocket, and the edge of a little book peeped forth a moment, and then was thrust back again. No; he would not trifle with his duty. He would be sternly, rigidly faithful; and the blessing would surely come in time. Yet it was with excessive languor he took up a little Burman tract prepared by himself, of which every word was as familiar as his own name, and commenced reading aloud. The sounds caught the ear of a coarsely-clad water-bearer, and she lowered the vessel from her head, and seated herself afar off, just within the shadow of the low eaves. Attracted by the foreign accent of the reader, not many passed without turning the head a few moments to listen; then catching at some word which seemed to them offensive, they would repeat it mockingly and hasten on.

Finally, the old water-bearer, grinning in angry derision till her wrinkled visage became positively hideous, rose, slowly adjusted the earthen vessel on

her head, and passed along, muttering as she went. The heart of the missionary sank within him, and he was on the point of laying down the book. But the shadow of another passer-by fell upon the path, and he continued a moment longer. It was a tall, dignified-looking man, leading by the hand a boy, the open mirthfulness of whose bright eyes was in perfect keeping with his dancing little feet. The stranger was of a grave demeanour, with a turban of aristocratic smallness, sandals turning up at the toe, a silken robe of colours somewhat subdued, and a snow-white tunic of gentlemanlike length, and unusual fineness.

"Father!" said the boy, with a merry little skip,* and twitching at the hand he was holding, "Look, look, father! *there* is Jesus Christ's man. How shockingly white!"

"Jesus Christ's man" raised his eyes from the book, which he could read just as well without eyes, and bestowed one of his brightest smiles upon the little stranger, just as the couple were passing beyond the corner of the *zayat*, but not too late to catch a bashfully pleased recognition. The father did not speak nor turn his head, but a ray of sunshine went down into the missionary's heart from those happy little eyes; and he somehow felt that his hour's reading had not been thrown away. He had remarked this man before, in other parts of the town; and had striven in various ways to attract his attention, but without success. He was evidently known, and most probably avoided; but the child, with that shy, pleased, half-confiding, roguish sort of smile, seemed sent as an encouraging messenger. The missionary continued his

reading with an increase of earnestness and emphasis. A priest wrapped his yellow robes about him and sat down upon the steps, as though for a moment's rest. Then, another stranger came up boldly, and with considerable ostentation seated himself on the mat. He proved to be a philosopher, from the school then recently disbanded at Prome; and he soon drew on a brisk animated controversy.

The missionary did not finish his day's work with the shutting up of the zayat. At night, in his closet, he remembered both philosopher and priest; pleaded long and earnestly for the scoffing old water-bearer; and felt a warm tear stealing to his eye, as he presented the case of the tall stranger, and the laughing, dancing ray of sunshine at his side.

Day after day went by, as oppressively hot, as dusty, and bringing as many feverish winds as ever; but the hours were less wearisome, because many little buds of hope had been fashioned, which might yet expand into perfect flowers. But every day the tall stranger carried the same imperturbable face past the zayat; and every day the child made some silent advance towards the friendship of the missionary, bending his half-shaven head, and raising his little nut-coloured hand to his forehead, by way of salutation, and smiling till his round face dimpled all over like ripples in a sunny pool. One day, as the pair came in sight, the missionary beckoned with his hand, and the child, with a single bound, came to his knee.

"Moung-Moung!" exclaimed the father, in a tone of surprise blended with anger. But the child was back again in a moment, with a gay-coloured Madras handkerchief wound around his head; and with his

bright lips parted, his eyes sparkling, and his face wreathed with smiles, he seemed the most charming object in nature. "*Tai hlah-the!*" ("very beautiful") said the child, touching his new turban, and looking into his father's clouded face, with the fearlessness of an indulged favourite.

"*Tai hlah-the!*" repeated the father involuntarily. He meant the child.

"You have a very fine boy there, sir," said the missionary, in a tone intended to be conciliatory. The stranger turned with a low salaam. For a moment he seemed to hesitate, as though struggling between his native politeness and his desire to avoid an acquaintance with the proselyting foreigner. Then taking the hand of the little boy, who was too proud and happy to notice his father's confusion, he hastened away.

"I do not think that zayat a very good place to go to, Moung-Moung," said the father gravely, when they were well out of hearing. The boy answered only by a look of inquiry strangely serious for such a face as his.

"These white foreigners are——." He did not say what, but shook his head with mysterious meaning. The boy's eyes grew larger and deeper, but he only continued to look up into his father's face in wondering silence. "I shall leave you at home to-morrow, to keep you from his wicked sorceries."

"Father!" "What, my son?"

"I think it will do no good to leave me at home."
"Why?"

"He has done something to me." "Who? the *Kalak-byoo?*"

"I do not think he has hurt me, father; but I can-

not—keep—away—no—oh, no!” “What do you mean, MOUNG-MOUNG?”

“The sorcerer has done something to me—put his bright eye on me. I see it *now*.” And the boy’s own eyes glowed with a strange, startling brilliancy.

“‘*Mai, Mai!*’ what a boy! *He* is not a sorcerer, only a very provoking man. His eye—whish! It is nothing to my little MOUNG-MOUNG. I was only sporting. But we will have done with him; you shall go there no more——”

“If I can help it, father!” “Help it! Hear the foolish child. What strange fancies!”

“Father!” “What, my son?”

“You will not be angry?” “Angry!” The soft smile on that stern bearded face was a sufficient answer.

“Is it true that she—my mother——?” “Hush, MOUNG-MOUNG!”

“Is it true that she ever *shikoed* to the Lord Jesus Christ?” “Who dares to tell you so?”

“I must not say, father; the one who told me said it *was* as much as life is worth to talk of such things to *your* son. Did she, father?”

“What did he mean? Who could have told you such a tale?” “Did she, father?”

“That is a very pretty *goung-boung* the foreigner gave you.” “Did she?”

“And makes your eyes brighter than ever.” “Did my mother *shiko* to the Lord Jesus Christ?”

“There, there, you have talked enough, my boy,” said the father gloomily; and the two continued their walk in silence. As the conversation ceased, a woman who, with a palm-leaf fan before her face, had followed

closely in the shadow of the stranger—so closely, indeed, that she might have heard every word that had been spoken—stopped at a little shop by the way, and was soon seemingly intent on making purchases.

“Ko Shway-bay!” called out the missionary. A man bearing a large satchel, which he had just newly filled with books, promptly appeared at the door of an inner apartment of the *zayat*.

“Did you observe the tall man who just passed, leading a little boy?” “I saw him. He is a writer under government—a very respectable man—haughty—reserved—and he hates—Christians.”

“Is he very bigoted, then?” “No, grave as he appears, he sometimes treats sacred things very playfully, always carelessly. But does the teacher remember—it may be now three, four—I do not know how many years ago,—a young woman came for medicine——?”

The missionary smiled. “I should have a wonderful memory, Shway-bay, if I carried all my applicants for medicine in it.” “But this one was not like other women. She had the face of a *nāt-thamee*,” (goddess or angel,) “and her voice—the teacher *must* remember her voice—it was like the silvery chimes of the pagoda bells at midnight. She was the favourite wife of the *Sah-ya*, and this little boy, her only child, was very ill. She did not dare ask you to the house, or even send a servant for the medicine, for her husband was one of the most violent persecutors——”

“Ah, I do recollect her, by her distress and her warm gratitude. So this is her child! What has become of the mother?”

"Has the teacher forgotten putting a Gospel of Matthew in her hand, and saying that it contained medicine for *her*, for that she was afflicted with a worse disease than the fever of her little son; and then lifting up his hands and praying very solemnly?" "I do not recall the circumstance just now. But what came of it?"

"They say," answered the Burman, lowering his voice, and first casting an investigating glance round him,—“they say that the medicine cured her. She read the book for whole nights, while watching by her child, and then she would kneel down and pray as the teacher had done. At last the *Sah-ya* got the writing.”

"What did he do with it?" "Only burned it. But she was a tender little creature, and could not bear his look; so, as the baby got out of danger, she took the fever——"

"And died?" asked the missionary, remarking some hesitation in the manner of his narrator. "Not of the fever altogether."

"What then? Surely, *he* did not——" "No, it must have been an angel-call. The *Sah-ya* was very fond of her, and did everything to save her; but she just grew weaker, day after day; and there was no holding her back. She got courage as she drew near Paradise, and begged the *Sah-ya* to send for you. He is not a hard-hearted man, and she was more than life and soul to him; but he would not send. And so she died, talking to the last moment of the Lord Jesus Christ, and calling on everybody about her to love Him, and worship none but Him."

"Is this true, Shway-bay?" "I know nothing

about it; and it is not very safe to know anything. The *Sah-ya* has taken an oath to destroy everybody having too good a memory. But,"—and the man again looked cautiously around him,—“does the teacher think that little Burman children are likely to run into the arms of foreigners, without being taught?”

“Aha! say you so, Shway-bay?” “I say nothing, teacher.”

“What of the child?” “A wonderful boy. He seems usually as you have seen him; but he has another look,—so strange! He must have caught something from his mother’s face, just before she went up to the golden country.”

The missionary seemed lost in thought; and the assistant, after waiting a moment to be questioned further, slung his satchel over his shoulder, and proceeded up the street.

The next day the missionary remarked that the *Sah-ya* went by on the other side of the way, and without the little boy; and the next day, and the next the same. In the meantime, the wrinkled old water-bearer had become a sincere inquirer. “The one shall be taken and the other left,” sighed the missionary, as he tried to discern the possible fate of his bright-eyed little friend.

The fourth day came. The old water-bearer was in an agitated state of joy and doubt—a timid, but true believer. The self-confident philosopher had almost ceased to cavil. Fresh inquirers had appeared, and the missionary’s heart was strengthened. “It is dull work,” he said to himself, though without any expression of dulness in his face; “but it is the Saviour’s

own appointed way, and the way the Holy Spirit will bless." Then his thoughts turned to the stern *Sah-ya* and his little boy; and he again murmured, with more of dejection in his manner than when he had spoken of the dulness of the work, "And the other left—the other left!"

The desponding words had scarcely passed his lips, when with a light laugh, the very child who was in his thoughts, and who somehow clung so tenaciously to his heart, sprang up the steps of the zayat, followed by his grave, dignified father. The boy wore his new Madras turban, arranged with a pretty sort of jauntiness, and above its showy folds he carried a red lacquered tray, with a cluster of golden plantains on it. Placing the gift at the missionary's feet, he drew back, with a pleased smile of boyish shyness, while the man, bowing courteously, took his seat upon the mat.

"Sit down, Mounng-Mounng, sit down," said the father, in a low tone to his little boy. "You are the foreign priest," he remarked civilly, and more by way of introduction than inquiry. "I am a missionary."

The stranger smiled, for he had purposely avoided the offensive epithet; and was amused and conciliated by the missionary's frank use of it. "And so you make people believe in Jesus Christ?" "I try to."

The visitor laughed outright; then, as if a little ashamed of his rudeness, he composed his features, and with his usual courtesy resumed, "My little son has heard of you, sir; and he is very anxious to learn something about Jesus Christ. It is a pretty story that you tell of him—prettier, I think, than any of our fables; and you need not be afraid to set it forth in its brightest

colours; for my MOUNG-MOUNG will never see through its absurdity, of course."

The missionary cast a quick, scrutinizing glance on the face of his visitor. He saw that the man was ill at ease, that his carelessness was entirely assumed, and that underneath all there was a deep, wearing anxiety, which he fancied was in some way connected with his boy. "Ah! you think so? To what particular story do you allude?"

"Why, that of the strange sort of being you call Jesus Christ,—a *nāt*, or prince, or something of that sort,—dying for us poor fellows, and so—ha, ha! The absurdity of the thing makes me laugh; though there is something in it beautiful too. Our stupid priests would never have thought out anything half so fine; and the pretty fancy has quite enchanted little MOUNG-MOUNG here."

"I perceive you are a *pāramāt*," said the missionary. "No,—oh no; I am a true and faithful worshipper of lord Gaudama; but of course neither you nor I subscribe to all the fables of our respective religions. There is quite enough that is honest and reasonable in our Budhistic system to satisfy me; but my little son" (here the father seemed embarrassed, and laughed again, as though to cover his confusion) "is bent on philosophical investigation—eh, MOUNG-MONG?" "But are you not afraid that my teachings will do the child harm?" said the missionary.

The visitor looked up with a broad smile of admiration, as though he would have said, "You are a very honest fellow, after all;" then regarding the child with a look of mingled tenderness and apprehension, he said softly, "Nothing can harm little MOUNG-MOUNG, sir."

"But what if I should tell you I do believe everything I preach, as firmly as I believe you sit on the mat before me; and that it is the one desire of my life to make everybody else believe it—you and your child among the rest?"

The *Sah-ya* tried to smile, tried to look unconcerned; but his easy nonchalance of manner seemed utterly to forsake him in his need; and finally abandoning the attempt to renew his former tone of banter, he answered quietly, "I have heard of a writing you possess, which, by your leave, I will take home and read to Moun-Moung."

The missionary selected a little tract from the parcel on the table beside him, and handed it to his visitor. "*Sah-ya*," said he, solemnly, "I herewith put into your hands the key to eternal life and happiness. This active, intelligent soul of yours, with its exquisite perception of moral beauty and loveliness,"—and he glanced toward the child,—"*cannot be destined to inhabit a dog, a monkey, or a worm, in another life. God made it for higher purposes; and I hope and pray that I may yet meet you, all bright and pure and glorious, in a world beyond the reach of pain or death, and above all, beyond the reach of sin.*"

Up to this time the boy had sat upon his mat like a statue of silence; his usually dancing eyes fixed steadfastly upon the speakers, and gradually dilating and acquiring a strange mystic depth of expression, of which they seemed at first incapable. At these words, however, he sprang forward. "Father! father! hear him! Let us both love the Lord Jesus Christ! My mother loved him; and in the golden country of the blessed she waits for us."

"I must go," said the *Sah-ya* hoarsely, and attempting to rise. "Let us pray!" said the missionary, kneeling down.

The child put his hands together, and placing them against his forehead, bowed his head to the mat; while the father yielded to the circumstances of the case so far as to reseat himself. Gradually, as the fervent prayer proceeded, his head drooped a little; and it was not long before he placed his elbows on his knees, and covered his face with his hands. As soon as the prayer was ended, he rose, bowed in silence, took his child by the hand, and walked away.

Day after day went by, the *Sah-ya*, as he passed the *zayat*, always saluting its occupant respectfully, but evincing no disposition to cultivate his acquaintance further. He was accompanied by the boy less often than formerly; but, from casual opportunities, the missionary remarked that a strange look of thoughtfulness had crept into the childish face, softening and beautifying, though scarcely saddening it. And when occasionally the child paused for a moment, to ask for a book, or exchange a word of greeting, the gay familiarity of his manner seemed to have given place to a tender, trustful affection, somewhat tinctured with awe.

Meanwhile that terrible scourge of Eastern nations, the cholera, had made its appearance, and it came sweeping through the town with its usual devastating power. Fires were kindled before every house, and kept burning night and day; while immense processions continually thronged the streets with gongs, drums, and tom-toms, to frighten away the evil spirits, and so arrest the progress of the disease. The *zayat* was closed for lack of visitors; and the missionary and

his assistants busied themselves in attending on the sick and dying.

It was midnight when the over-wearied foreigner was roused from his slumbers by the calls of the faithful Ko Shway-bay.

"Teacher, teacher, you are wanted!" "Where?"

The man lowered his voice almost to a whisper, but putting his hands to each side of his mouth, sent the volume of sound through a crevice in the boards. "At the *Sah-ya's*."

"Who?" "I do not know, teacher; I only heard that the cholera was in the house, and the teacher was wanted, and so I hurried off as fast as possible."

In a few minutes, the missionary had joined his assistant, and they proceeded on their way together. As they drew near the house, the Burman paused in the shadow of a bamboo hedge. The verandah of the house was thronged with relatives and dependents; and from an inner room came a wild, wailing sound, which told that death was already there. No one seemed to observe the entrance of the foreigner; and he followed the sound of woe till he stood by the corpse of the little child. Then he paused in deep emotion. "He has gone up the golden country, to bloom for ever amid the royal lilies of Paradise," murmured a voice close to his ear.

The missionary, a little startled, turned abruptly. A middle-aged woman, holding a palm-leaf fan to her mouth, was the only person near him. "He worshipped the true God," she continued, suffering the individuality of her voice to glide away and mingle with the wail of the mourners, and occasionally slurring a word which she dared not pronounce with distinctness; "he

worshipped the true God, and trusted in the Lord our Redeemer,—the Lord Jesus Christ, he trusted in Him. He called, and he was answered. He was weary, weary, and in pain; and the Lord, who loved him, took him home to be a little golden lamb in His bosom for ever."

"How long since did he go?" "About an hour." Then joining in the wail again, "An hour amid the royal lilies; and his mother—his own beautiful mother—she of the starry eyes and silken hand——"

"Was he conscious?" "Conscious and full of joy."

"What did he talk of?" "Only of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose face he seemed to see!"

"And his father?" "His father!—Oh, my master! my noble master! he is going, too! Come and see!"

"Who sent for me?" "Your handmaid, sir."

"Not the *Sah-ya*?" The woman shook her head. "The agony was on him—he could not have sent, if he would."

"But how dared *you*?" There was a look such as might have been worn by the martyrs of old upon the woman's face as she expressively answered, "God was here!"

In the next apartment lay the fine figure of the *Sah-ya*, stretched upon a couch, evidently in the last stage of the fearful disease—his pain all gone.

"It grieves me to meet you thus, my friend," remarked the visitor, by way of testing the dying man's consciousness.

The *Sah-ya* made a gesture of impatience. Then his fast stiffening lips stirred, but they were powerless to convey a sound; there was a feeble movement, as though he would have pointed at something, but his

half-raised finger wavered and sank back again ; and a look of dissatisfaction amounting to anxiety passed over his countenance. Finally, renewing the effort, he succeeded in laying his two hands together, and with some difficulty lifted them to his forehead ; and then quietly and calmly closed his eyes.

“Do you trust in lord Gaudama in a moment like this ?” inquired the missionary, uncertain for whom the act of worship was intended. There was a quick tremor in the shut lids, and the poor *Sah-ya* unclosed his eyes with an expression of mingled pain and disappointment ; while the death-heavy hands slid from their position back upon the pillow.

“Lord Jesus, receive his spirit,” exclaimed the missionary solemnly. A bright, joyous smile flitted across the face of the dying man, parting the lips, and even seeming to shed light upon the glazed eyes ; a sigh-like breath fluttered his bosom for a moment ; the finger which he had before striven to lift pointed distinctly upward, then fell heavily across his breast ; and the disembodied spirit stood in the presence of its Maker.

The thrilling death-wail commenced with the departure of the breath ; for although several who had been most assiduous in their attentions glided away when it was ascertained that he who would have rewarded their fidelity was gone, there were yet many who were prevented, some by real affection, some by family pride, from so far yielding to their fears as to withhold the honours due to the departed.

“You had better go now,” whispered the woman, “you can do no further good, and may receive harm.” “And who are you, that you have braved the danger to yourself of bringing me here ?”

"Pass on, and I will tell you." They drew near the body of the child, which, by the rush to the other apartment, had been left, for a moment, alone.

"See!" said the woman, lifting the cloth reverently. A copy of the Gospel of Matthew lay on his bosom.

"Who placed it there?"

"He did, with his own dear little hand;" and the woman's voice gave expression to one swell of agony, and then died away in a low wail, like that which proceeded from the adjoining room. Presently she resumed, "I was his mother's nurse. She got this book of you, sir. We thought my master burned it; but he kept, and, may be, studied it. Do you think that he became a true believer?"

"To whom did he *shiko* at that last moment?"

"To the Lord Jesus Christ—I am sure of that. Do you think the Lord would receive him, sir?"

"Did you ever read about the thief who was crucified with the Saviour?" "Oh, yes; I read it to Moun-g-Moun-g this very day. He was holding his mother's book when the disease smote him; and he kept it in his hand, and *went up* with it lying on his bosom. Yes, I remember."

"The Lord Jesus Christ is just as merciful now as He was then."

"And so they are all——oh, it is almost too much to believe!"

"When did you first become acquainted with this religion?"

"My mistress taught me, sir, and made me promise to teach her boy when he was old enough; and to go to you for more instruction. But I was alone, and afraid. I sometimes got as far as the big banyan-tree

on the corner, and crawled away again so trembling with terror that I could scarcely stand upon my feet. At last I found out Ko Shway-bay, and he promised to keep my secret; and he gave me books, and explained their meaning, and taught me how to pray, and I have been getting courage ever since. I should not much mind now, if they did find me out and kill me."

It was two or three weeks before the missionary resumed his customary place in the zayat by the wayside. His hearers were scattered widely; in the neighbouring jungles, in far-off towns, and in that other place from whence "no traveller returns."

Where was his last hopeful inquirer? Dead.

Where the priest? Dead.

Where the philosopher? Fled away, none knew whither.

And the poor old water-bearer? Dead,—died like a dog in its kennel; and, but that some pitying Christian had succeeded in discovering her at the last moment, without a human witness. But—and the missionary's heart swelled with gratitude to God as he thought of it—there were other witnesses, nobler, tenderer, dearer, to that simple, lone old creature, than all the earthly friends that ever thronged a death-bed: and these had been her bright, rejoicing convoy to the Saviour's presence.

Oh! how full of awe, how fearfully laden with the solemn interests of eternity, appeared this wondrous work of the missionary! And how broad and clear seemed his sacred commission, as though at that moment newly traced by the finger of Jehovah!

WHAT IS TIME ?

TIME is a river, down whose rapid stream,
An unreturning way, we each are wending ;
Time is a night, to whose wild fitful dream
There comes ere long a strange and solemn ending ;
Time is a plain, across whose wide extent
We journey, childhood sporting, youth careering,
Manhood with hot and eager toil, age bent,
The footsteps faltering, as the goal is nearing.

The river falls into a tideless sea ;
The dim night wanes into a vivid morning ;
The wide plain ends where Death stands mockingly,
Youth's speed alike, and age's lateness scorning ;
What then ? no eye hath seen, no tongue can tell,
No image nature's storehouse can supply,
To picture forth the thronging thoughts that swell
Upon the mind where looms Eternity !

R. CHESTER

THE QUEEN OF THE LAKES.

THE Lake of Windermere, or Winandermere more properly, viewed in connexion with the surrounding scenery, is one of the most beautiful sheets of water upon which the eye can gaze. It is the largest of the English lakes, extending nearly eleven miles in length, with an average width of three-quarters of a mile. Its features are exceedingly diversified. Around the head of the lake we have a gorgeous array of lofty mountains, which for their impressive grandeur are scarcely to be surpassed anywhere in England; they stand graceful but dignified, casting their mighty shadows, as the evening sun declines, over the broadest part of the lake. At the southern extremity, nature exhibits "the softer features of a more diffusive and less elevated landscape, under the graceful forms of gentle swells and undulations, gliding down to the margin of the lake." The shores of these bright waters are adorned with hanging woods, handsome mansions, and tracts of highly-cultivated land, investing with additional charms this queen of English lakes.

Seen from an eminence near Bowness, the various pleasing objects occupy new relative situations, and all assume a different appearance. "You look down," says Mr. Young, "upon a noble winding valley of about twelve miles long, everywhere inclosed with



grounds which rise in a very bold and various manner ; in some places bulging into mountains, abrupt, wild, and cultivated ; in others, breaking into rocks, craggy, pointed, and irregular ; here rising into hills covered with the noblest woods, presenting a gloomy brownness of shade, almost from the clouds to the reflection of the trees in the limpid water of the lake they so beautifully skirt ; there, waving in glorious slopes of cultivated inclosures, adorned in the sweetest manner with every object that can give variety to art or elegance to nature ; trees, woods, villages, houses, farms, scattered with picturesque confusion.

“This valley, so beautifully inclosed, is floated by the lake, which spreads forth to the right and left in one vast but irregular expanse of transparent water ; a more noble object can hardly be imagined. Its immediate shore is traced in every variety of line that fancy can conceive ; sometimes contracting the lake into the appearance of a noble winding river ; at others retiring from it, and opening into large bays as if for navies to anchor in ; promontories spread with woods, or scattered with trees and inclosures, projecting into the water in the most picturesque style possible ; rocky points breaking the shore, and rearing their bold heads above the water ; in a word, a variety that amazes the beholder.”* And next, forming an elegant finish to the scene, the crystal sheet of water itself is studded with no fewer than fourteen islets, all verdant and well wooded, and distinctly perceptible to the eye. The largest island, consisting of twenty-eight acres, is called Belle Isle, or Curwen’s Island, from its former proprietor.

* Tudor’s “Domestic Memoirs of a Christian Family.”

Windermere is well stocked with fish of various kinds. The char taken here during the winter months are much esteemed; they are potted, and sent to London and other places. The waters of the lake are sometimes violently agitated, and on this account are dangerous for sailing vessels. The lake is fed by the rivers Rothay and Brathay, and several others of inferior note pouring into it from all sides, some tumbling down the steep and rocky mountains, forming beautiful cascades, particularly after heavy rains. The outlet for these waters is the Leven, which empties itself into Morecombe Bay.

How beautiful to contrast with those ruffled waters, tossed by the sudden storm, the deep calm of this lovely lake, when, as we have seen it, like a sheet of liquid silver, it flashes back the light of the setting sun! Is not this a meet emblem of that peace of God which passeth all understanding, which pervades the bosom of him whose "life is hid with Christ in God?" Embosomed and sheltered by the mountains round about, does it not remind us of the soul which is protected by power that cannot fail, by faithfulness which cannot change, and by a love enduring as the everlasting hills? Yes! at morning, at mid-day, the bark of the Christian may be imperilled by tempests, but it cannot perish, and "following on to know the Lord," the hour of parting day will be "PEACE"—
"PERFECT peace."

"So fades the summer cloud away,
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er,
So calmly shuts the eye of day,
So dies the wave along the shore."

THE DISCONTENTED FLOWERS.

BY OLD HUMPHREY.

ONCE on a time, certain flowers of the fields and large garden of Oakham Grange took it into their unwise heads to be discontented. "If all of us of one colour grew together," said the red rose, "we should cut a fine dash, and mankind would admire us ten times more than ever. Flowers of spirit!" cried she, the colour rising into her cheeks as she spoke; "'Now or Never,' is my motto. Let us take the matter into our own hands; let us get together, and astonish the world with our splendour."

"Good," said the yellow daffodil (for when once discontent and pride raise a standard, multitudes will be sure to repair to it). "Good," said she, as she stood sunning herself on a slope hard by, "there is wisdom in the resolution of the rose. Look at the earth when it is all illumined with golden sunshine, never does it look half so handsome! When one colour prevails it looks like a flood of glory."

"That is just my way of thinking," said the blue corn-flower, who was holding a *tête-à-tête* with a poppy at the corner of the wheat-field. "How lovely is the sky above us, all of one colour! and what a sweet colour, too! when we blue flowers once get all together, we shall be amazed at our own beauty. I wonder much, for my part, that the plan was not adopted years

ago, but 'Better late than never.' The rose gives us good counsel."

"So say I," said the lily, "and the sooner we adopt it the better. How pure and lovely the fields appear when covered with snow! White here, white there, and white everywhere! Depend upon it, we have too long deprived ourselves of what is our due, and the world has been no better than a piece of patchwork."

The leaves of the trees and the blades of grass did their best to increase the discontent of the flowers. "We have tried the thing on a large scale," said they, "and find that it answers; nothing like a prevailing colour! What can exceed the beauty of green fields and green trees?"

Encouraged and strengthened by union, the red rose, the yellow daffodil, the blue corn-flower, and the white lily, grew increasingly bold. They seemed to regard themselves as the leaders of their respective colours, and acted with energy.

And now a very unusual commotion took place among the flower-beds of the garden. Roses unrooted themselves to join their companions; tulips, pinks, and peonies followed their example; nor were carnations, poppies, sweetwilliams, or love-lies-bleeding, backward in joining the general muster. The effect was striking, for never before had there been seen in the garden of Oakham Grange such a ruddy blaze in the vegetable world. The red rose held up her head, almost too proud to allow her foot to touch the ground.

No sooner were the red flowers assembled, than the yellow ones began to bestir themselves. Led on by the daffodil, yellow lupins of the garden, cowslips, primroses and buttercups of the meadow, with broom

and furze from the common, ranged themselves beside each other. A golden glow spread itself around, and never had the daffodil before been half so happy. "This is something like!" said she, tossing her head in the wind; "I wonder what the world will think of us now!"

Scarcely had the daffodil finished her exclamation, before the corn-flower was on the move, kept in countenance by convolvuluses, flags, Canterbury bells, blue-bells, and lavender. Where so many blue flowers came from it would have been hard to say. All of them were proud—but the proudest among them was the corn-flower.

"Come along," cried the lily to a goodly number of white flowers that were gathering round her; and immediately a throng of snowdrops, daisies, lilies of the valley, white roses, white convolvuluses, and white poppies, pressed onward to concentrate themselves together. How it was that flowers blooming at different seasons happened on this occasion to bloom together, it would be hard to say; there, however, they were. Talk of carved ivory and sculptured marble! never yet was marble or ivory made to look half so lovely as those flowers.

The large garden of Oakham Grange was now altogether changed; for instead of the beautiful order in which it was usually kept, it was divided only into four quarters, and every quarter of a different colour—red, yellow, blue, and white—just as regular as the squares on a draught-board. The red flowers occupied the diamond square pointing to the south, the white flowers that to the north, the yellow flowers that to the east, and the blue flowers that to the west. Such a sight

was almost enough to drive old John Andrews, the gardener, out of his senses.

Alack a-day! there is no such a thing, even among flowers, as a state of perfection, and those now crowded together in the Grange garden soon found this to be the case. So long as they grew by themselves, every one had an opportunity of being admired; but when all were together, it was seen at once that only the tip-top ones would be noticed. This created very general dissatisfaction.

But besides this annoyance, a feud, which might have been foreseen from the first, took place among the leaders, as to which colour should rank the highest; and soon the position of the red rose, the blue corn-flower, the yellow daffodil, and the white lily became a position of difficulty and vexation.

The rose contended that the sun, the source of light, was red; therefore red was unquestionably the most important colour. The daffodil denied this assertion, affirming that the sun was golden, and rather yellow than red, and therefore yellow, of all colours, was entitled to honour. The corn-flower upheld that, not the colour of the sun, but the prevailing colour of the whole firmament, ought to decide the question, and then blue would be estimated as it ought to be. The lily was of opinion that the colour of spotless purity, which undoubtedly was white, was entitled to the highest rank.

And now, probably, a civil war of the most disastrous kind might have broken out, had it not been for a fortunate occurrence, which very unexpectedly took place. By mere accident, at this important crisis farmer Brown came into the garden, and up at once went his hands and his eyebrows at the sight. "I am not quite

certain," said he, "whether I am wide awake or not, but if I am, I won't long be the owner of such a garden as this. I like bluebells, corn-flowers, daffodils, buttercups, and daisies in the meadows well enough, but I don't like them, and I won't have them, in my garden. I like roses, lilies, tulips, pinks, and peonies, as well as my neighbours; but I don't like them, and I won't have them, stuck up all of a heap together, where one can't tell one from another; so I'll just see if Andrews and I can't grub up the whole lot of them; in another hour or two they shall all be on the dung heap, if my name's Richard Brown."

While farmer Brown went to fetch John Andrews, the flowers, who had heard every word which had been spoken, made the best of their time, by far the greater number of them being thoroughly convinced that they had made a wrong move. The roses, tulips, pinks, and the rest of the garden flowers, feeling as if they had been nipped by the frost, shrunk back again to their accustomed beds; the buttercups, daisies, and others, took their nearest way to the meadows; and the furze and the broom hurried off to the common. As if by magic the garden of Oakham Grange resumed its former appearance, so that when the farmer came back again with John Andrews, he could not tell whether his eyes had deceived him or not.

* * * * *

"Rather an odd story that," said farmer Brown, as he prepared to sit down to his breakfast, after relating the above dream, which had sadly disturbed his nightly slumbers. "I'd give a trifle to know the meaning of this vision of mine," said he, "if I could find some one who would interpret it for me."

Here the farmer gave a shrewd look at his father, whose name was Daniel, and who was seated, with his spectacles on his nose, at a round table by the window, with his Bible before him.

"Richard," said old Daniel Brown, putting his spectacles from his nose, "it will neither suit me to interpret your dream, nor you to reward me as interpreters used to be rewarded, but if this is a fair sample of your nightly visions, the more you have of them the better.

"There is in the holy book before me a text after the following fashion: 'God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction,' Job xxxiii. 14—16. Now, though there is a great deal of difficulty in the subject of dreams, there can be none in adopting this rule respecting them: 'Never despise a dream when you can get good from it.' In this matter I think we shall all agree.

"Your dream of the Discontented Flowers sets forth so strikingly the folly of repining and pride, that to disregard it would be no proof of wisdom. It warns us that when we change our situation through discontent, we are likely to leap 'out of the frying-pan into the fire,' and that we cannot give way to pride without making ourselves ridiculous. It tells, too, that those who lead others into difficulty have an eye to their own interest, and that when danger comes, they are the first to flee from it.

"You are too keenly set on your breakfast, Richard, to listen to me any longer now; let me hope that your next dream will be as full of amusement and instruction as that of the Discontented Flowers."

THE COUNSELS OF THE LORD ARE WONDERFUL.

A TRUE NARRATIVE.

At a desk in his study sat a father, whose forehead showed the strongly marked lines of thought; he seemed deeply engaged in reading a large book, and his serious eye rested long, and with earnest investigation, on one passage.

The pattering of little feet was heard in the hall, and a tiny hand knocked gently at the door several times. As the father was lost in thought, and did not say "Come in," the little fingers pressed the lock, and a curly-headed girl, running into the room, sought her father's eye with a beaming countenance. The presence of the little one was not remarked, for a grand and holy idea seemed to occupy her father's mind. The child took courage, and said in a low voice, "Papa, may I come in?" Her father looked towards the door, and the earnest expression of his face suddenly changed; he held out his hand smilingly to the little girl, and said, "Come, darling, come to papa!" And the little one hastening to his arms was soon seated on her father's knee, twining her arms about his neck, and looking into his face with her deep blue eyes.

Lydia, the little daughter, had been borne on the prayerful hearts of her parents to the throne of mercy. The effects of grace were early visible in her. While yet an infant, she would suddenly cease crying, and remain quiet, when her mother, laying her hands on the child's head, blessed it according to her daily custom. A little later, the child evinced great love for the Saviour, combined, at the same time, with pity for the suffering; and so intense was her desire to help them, that she willingly gave away her dearest treasures for that purpose. Her parents endeavoured to cultivate these holy germs, with prayer-seeking wisdom from the Lord, and strove not to hinder the work of the Holy Spirit.

"Papa, have you finished reading?" asked the little girl.

"Yes, my child, you can remain with me a little while."

"That large book is the Bible, is it not, papa?"

"Yes, Lydia, that is the Holy Bible, which is given to us by the Holy Spirit."

"Tell me, papa, what have you just been reading in the Holy Bible?"

"I have been reading, my child, that God loved his people Israel from all eternity, and that He will still love them, whom, though He chastises, He has never cast off; and whom He will bring back to the Holy Land, when the time is fulfilled, forgiving all their sins, and pouring out his Holy Spirit upon them."

Lydia, who was well acquainted with the people of Israel, through the Old Testament, listened to her father with fixed attention, and said at last—

“ Papa, will Esther go to the Holy Land also ? ”

Esther was the only daughter of a rich Jew in the town, who inhabited a fine house in the suburbs, which was surrounded by a pleasant, indeed almost magnificent shrubbery, in the neighbourhood of Lydia's dwelling.

Lydia, in passing by with her parents, had often peeped through the iron railings, rejoicing in the varied exotics which bloomed richly there, and admiring the fountain whose sparkling showers fell in a thousand brilliant hues around. Sometimes she had also seen Esther wandering through the dark alleys, or had heard her deep melancholy song resound from the cypress bower. Once, even, as the child stood at the railing, and could not turn her eyes away from the beautiful flower-beds, Esther came to the gate, and handed little Lydia a lovely nosegay through the railing ; Lydia then saw the young maiden for the first time distinctly : she had remarked the deep, earnest, thoughtful features, and could not forget Esther again. The little one now wished to know whether Esther would also return home to the Holy Land, and waited with anxiety for her father's answer.

“ Yes, my child, if God spares her life so long, till that great day comes, she will then return too.”

Again a beam of joy lit up Lydia's countenance.

“ Then, papa,” continued she, “ Esther will not be sorrowful any more ; she will cease to sing those melancholy songs.”

“ No, dear child,” said her father, smilingly ; “ then she will join in hymns of praise to the Redeemer of her people, and bless with us the Saviour of the world.”

This rejoiced Lydia's heart; she clapped her hands, and cried out, "Then Esther will sing with me—

' Hosanna to the Son
Of David and of God,
Who brought the news of pardon down,
And bought us with his blood.

' To Christ th' anointed King,
Be endless blessings giv'n;
Let the whole earth his glory sing,
Who made our peace with heav'n.' "

She began to sing the verses, and jumped down from her father's knee, for the little heart was much too full to let her remain quiet. She was already at the door, when she turned round again, as it that moment struck her why she had really come.

"Papa," said she, "mamma says the cloth is laid, and all is ready."

Just then, indeed, her mother came to see where her husband was. Soon after, the parents and child sat down to dinner. Grace was said, and the soup helped; but Lydia remained sitting still, and slightly embarrassed, with her hands folded, and head hanging down.

"Lydia, will you not eat anything?" asked her mother.

"No, dear mamma."

"Are you not hungry?"

"Yes, dear mamma," the little one said, "but I will eat nothing;" she blushed, and looked on the ground.

The parents made a sign to each other, and left the little one alone. She touched nothing, but when the meal was over, her mother brought a basket of apples;

her father took a red-cheeked one, and threw it into his little daughter's lap; she took it joyfully and thankfully, eating it with pleasure. Then she drew her little stool, and sat down between her father and mother; laying her head on her father's knee, and taking her mother's hand, she said in a whisper—

“Papa, mamma.”

“What do you wish, Lydia?” her father inquired kindly.

The little girl covered one eye, and looking up at her father timidly and playfully with the other, whispered, “Dear papa, do give me some money, instead of my dinner.”

“Do you want money, my darling?”

“Yes, papa, much money; pray, dear mamma, give me money, instead of my dinner.”

Her father then drew out his purse, and counted six new kreutzers into his little daughter's hand. Lydia skipped with delight, and kissed the hands, as well as the cheeks, of her father and mother, springing joyfully out of the room.

“What has seized our Lydia?” exclaimed the mother, when the little one had gone out.

“I have my suspicions, Mary; but let us continue to pray for our child; we will wait and see how it goes on.”

The child's object soon developed itself.

Lydia decidedly declined taking more than the soup at dinner, and received six kreutzers each time from her father: her mother made her a present of a little purse. Matters continued so a short time, then a pattering was again heard in the hall, the light finger again knocked at the door, and soon afterwards our little one

again sat on her father's knee, with one arm round his neck, holding in the other hand a little leathern purse. She looked at her father, and seemed anxious to say something, but uttered no sound.

"What does my Lydia wish to do with the little purse?" inquired her father gently.

"Papa, pray, dear papa, give me a Holy Bible for it."

"But, my pet, you cannot read yet; what will you do with the Bible?"

"I will take it to Esther, papa."

Her father's eyes filled with tears. He kissed his child's forehead, laid his hand on her head, and remained silent: however, his heart was not silent. A father's blessings and prayers are powerful, and find their way to the throne of grace.

He then fetched a Bible, and handed it to his overjoyed child.

"Thank you, dear, good papa," cried the little girl; laying her purse on the desk, she ran hastily downstairs to her mother in the kitchen, and called out, "Mamma, dear mamma, here is a Holy Bible for Esther." The mother observed what passed in Lydia's mind, although she knew nothing of the conversation with her father.

That day, Lydia again ate her full meal with her parents; those who looked at her soon remarked that she was unusually happy. She did not part with her Bible for a moment; after dinner she took it in both arms, and wandered with it through the garden and yard, disappearing at last into the stable. The maid, who was occupied in a loft near it, looked through the crevices, and observed how the little one pressed

the Bible close to her heart, kissed it several times, and then kneeled down. She heard when she said, "Dear Saviour, bless Esther," but understood nothing else.

"God bless the pious child!" exclaimed the maid, her eyes filling with tears as she looked after Lydia, who was running through the gate into the street.

"Where can she be going?" thought Anna.

She went as far as the iron railings, stood a long time there, and looked with quiet delight at the waving flower-beds.

Esther was nowhere to be seen, but she never doubted for a moment that she would come, because she had prayed to God for it. And she came. Out of a neighbouring path which terminated close to the gate stepped Esther, with a bouquet of budding roses in her hand, and her look suddenly fell on the child, whose curly head peeped through an opening in the railing.

"Esther," cried the little one, emboldened, "come, I have something for you." The maiden came towards the gate, a gentle smile lighting up her melancholy features, as she looked at the innocent child. Lydia grasped her Bible with both hands, handed it through the railings, and said—"Esther, I bring you the Holy Bible, in which it is written that you will be permitted to return to the Holy Land, and that Jesus Christ loves you dearly."

Esther gazed at her in silent astonishment: suddenly the former melancholy expression settled on her features; she had then just heard the name which her father never uttered without expressions of the deepest contempt.

She looked undecidedly in the face of the little girl.

Lydia regarded her with that tenderness which beams from the eyes of Christ's lambs, and said, in a tone of entreaty, "Esther, take this holy book, Jesus loves you."

A vivid glance flashed from the dark eyes of the Jewess; she looked round, and as she saw no one, she seized the Bible, hurriedly pressed the child's hand, and vanished quickly in a dark alley. The little girl withdrew also: her heart beat, her eyes rested still on Esther's lovely figure, which had engraven itself deeply on her mind.

She returned home slowly; it seemed to her as if an irresistible power drew her towards Esther. Her heart was filled with that holy love which we sometimes meet with unalloyed in the souls of children renewed by grace. Lydia never omitted the dear name of Esther, and of the people to whom she belonged, in her prayers. Often at twilight, or after dinner, Lydia would place herself at her father's feet, and say, "Oh, pray, papa, tell me about the people of Israel." And her father would then begin to relate about Abraham, how God had first entered into a covenant with him, and separated him from the heathen; how He gave Abraham a son after many years, and prepared Himself a people, whom He led wonderfully, and called his chosen and peculiar people.

He related about Joseph and his brethren, how God led this family first to Egypt, how He blessed and increased them there, and at last by great miracles or wonders and signs, brought them out of Egypt through the wilderness into the Holy Land, and went before them Himself in the pillar of cloud and fire, as their rightful leader and King. Then he spoke of Mount Sinai, where Israel received the law, that they might

depend upon God alone, and remain separate from other nations: He having represented Himself in all things as Israel's King and Father.

"Papa," exclaimed the little girl, "at another time, "Israel must certainly have loved their good God."

"Lydia," he answered, "the people often grieved Him by their worship of strange idols, although God had frequently reproved and warned them through his holy prophets, who had foretold the coming of the Saviour. The Lord Jesus came at last, but they did not believe in Him, and crucified Him. From that time Israel has lain under the displeasure and chastisement of God," the father concluded, "and is scattered over all lands, is oppressed and martyred, as they once martyred the Saviour; but a gracious God has nevertheless promised a time of mercy. Israel will return to their rest, they will go back to their inheritance in the Holy Land; they will receive the Holy Spirit, 'and,' saith the Lord, 'they shall look upon me whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son,' Zech. xii. 10. They will bend the knee, weeping and wailing, to Jesus Christ, and will remain God's chosen and beloved people."

When her father spoke on these subjects, Lydia was so happy that she could scarcely suppress the outward expressions of joy. She then generally slipped away into a corner and prayed: "Lord Jesus, come soon, and lead thy people home!" Love to Israel increased daily in the mind of the child, and she knew how to awaken it in the hearts of her little friends.

A long time passed ere Lydia saw Esther again, but a lively desire to do so took possession of her. She often stood at the iron railings, and looked on all sides

in the hope of seeing the beloved Jewess, but in vain. The roses had faded, the flowers of autumn had already unfolded their variegated tints, and the foliage of the shrubbery assumed the shades congenial to the season; the apple and other trees bent under the weight of rich fruit, still Esther had not been seen again. Lydia's mind was filled with deep anxiety. She prayed oftener and more earnestly, "O Lord Jesus, bless Esther, and bless the holy book to her." The thought often crossed her that she would go direct to Esther's house and visit her, but a measure of timidity deterred her. At last she concluded that Esther must be ill, and this drove her still more earnestly to prayer; indeed she began to pray quite decidedly, "Lord, let me see Esther again!"

And the Lord grants the requests of his children. One day Lydia stood again at the railing, and looked with longing eye into the garden. A dark figure appeared from the arbour, coming slowly towards her; Lydia, to her great delight, recognised her beloved Esther. But how changed she was! her step was so weary, her figure so emaciated, her dark locks hanging carelessly over her shoulders—can that be Esther, or no? At last she drew near; she appeared to have discovered the child, for she moved more quickly, and a visible agitation shook her frame.

"Is it you, darling child?" said she, in a tender tone, and took the hand of the little one with both hers. Lydia looked with a happy smile into her large dark eye for a moment, then burst into tears, and clasped Esther's hand tightly.

"Why do you weep, my dear child? are you shocked at Esther?"

"Esther, are you ill?" inquired Lydia, after a pause.

"Yes, my darling, I have been very ill, and am still so, but my heart is healthy. Thank you, thank you, dearest child, for that holy book; it was my preserver." A radiant smile passed over the child's face.

"Esther," she said, quickly, "do you love my Lord Jesus now too, and do you know that He will lead you home to the Holy Land?"

"Yes, God be praised, I love Him and know that He will lead us home to the Holy Land, and I think He will soon take me home; yes, very soon!"

She spoke these words with peculiar emphasis, and for a moment there passed a beatified expression over her countenance, of that joy which had overcome the world.

"Lydia," continued she, "yonder, in that shady arbour, in a casket under the bench, lies my treasure buried in the ground; there lies the book which has brought me peace. Jesus Christ reward you for it. It was my greatest grief that I could not read it during my illness, lest any one should see it; but many words and promises remained in my heart, which refreshed me daily. God bless you, my dear child," she said quickly; for she saw her father coming at a distance; she pressed the little girl's hand with warmth, and whispered—"Pray for Esther." The little one went home with a full heart. Oh, how much she had been permitted to hear and see! Esther returned to the house leaning on her aged father's arm. The latter looked with anxiety at the pale suffering face, trembling hands, and languid gait. Her tender tone, exceedingly mild gentle manner, and the touching looks which she sometimes

fixed on her father, went to his heart. Now for the first time, a frightful thought pierced his heart. "What," said he, inwardly, "if God should take Esther from me, my dear and only child! Oh, it is too hard, too hard! Must I be like one who is bereft of all his children?"

Esther was the only one of seven children who, and a faithful wife, remained to him; she was the joy and delight of his heart, and his comfort in age. For Esther testified the tenderest submission, as well as childlike love to her father; she anticipated his slightest wish, and as warm a confidence existed between father and daughter as it was possible for such hearts to feel. But since Esther had become acquainted with the Bible, and so warm a love to Jesus animated her soul, this confidence was somewhat disturbed, for she felt in some measure guilty towards her father, and yet had the Lord become so powerful within her.

The maiden suffered severely under this feeling, while it was less perceptible to the father, as she had lain for so many weeks dangerously ill.

But she was soon to be released from this world of tears and sorrows. She suffered a great deal from outward pain, but still more from inward struggles. However, the faithful Saviour, who had chosen her from the beginning for his own, led her with powerful hand through all doubts, all darkness, all anguish, to a blessed rest in his sufferings and death.

It was on a lovely autumn evening, when Esther sent to request that her father would visit her sick-chamber. Her illness had attained the highest pitch, and the whole house was in deep grief.

With sunken head, and eyes red with weeping, the

aged man stepped into the presence of his daughter; his tall figure seemed bent under the burden of misery, his dark fiery eye rested with a passionate expression on Esther.

She lay quiet there; a melancholy smile hovered over her features, on which the peace of God was impressed.

The sunbeam, as it passed through the window, and fell on the blue silk curtains surrounding Esther's bed, threw a soft pale glimmering light on the sick couch.

Esther seized her father's hand, pressing it with tenderness to her lips, and said: "Father, I have but a few moments to live; soon, very soon, I shall be called home. Father, I thank you for all your faithful love, which has formed my happiness from the time that I can remember.—Forgive Esther, if she has grieved you"—

Her voice faltered. She wept long on the breast of her sobbing father. At length she revived. She raised herself with the last effort of strength, clasped both her father's hands, and said, while she looked earnestly into his eyes: "Father, I have yet one request; if you love your child, fulfil it, I pray you!"

"What can I do for you, my dear child? Oh, I will fulfil all!"

Esther's heart beat audibly; she was silent for a moment, and then said, in a firm voice:

"Father, I pray you speak no more against Jesus of Nazareth: He it is who has given me peace in life, and in death.—Lord Jesus," continued she, while she folded her hands, and cast her eyes upwards, "bless my father, and grant that I may meet him again before thy throne! Have pity upon me, Lord Jesus. Amen!"

Esther fell back on the pillow, and lay in a state of insensibility, from which she never again awoke here below. Her spirit had gone home to the heavenly Canaan, and was praising Him whom her forefathers nailed to the cross. The prisoner of Zion was released, her lips were filled with praise, for the Lord had done great things for her.

Now she stands at the throne of God, and waits with us for the great day when Israel shall return to its rest; and joins with the heavenly host, as well as the Church below, in praying: "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." We comfort ourselves with the words of the promise: "Can a woman forget her sucking child?—yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Isa. xlix. 15.

But how did Esther's father feel meanwhile? Long did he hold the corpse of his child in a convulsive grasp: a two-edged sword pierced through his soul. His strength was broken, his joy was gone: for several years he withdrew from the world, sick at heart, and weary from within and without.

But He whom Esther had called upon in her dying hour, Jesus Christ, was with him, although he did not know Him. He guided, comforted, quieted the sorrowing father, and led him safely through the "strait and narrow way."

One day the aged man found himself in the shady arbour in which Esther had so often reposed; in changing the position of the bench, he found his daughter's Bible, in which her name was written. The most opposite feelings struggled in his heart: with disgust he flung the book away; then seized it again, cast a hurried glance over it, and then threw it from him

again. However, at length he began to read, to examine, to inquire ; and the Word of God proved like a hammer which shatters a rock.

After many and severe struggles, the Lord Jesus remained conqueror. The old Israelite found forgiveness for sins, and peace in the cross of Him whom his forefathers had crucified ; who had come to seek and to save those that were lost. His weary and broken heart was healed by the faithful hand of the Saviour, and the stains of conscience washed clean through his blood.

For days together he sat before his dear Bible, and, as the counsels of God became clearer and clearer to his eyes, he would burst forth into loud praises ; indeed, at last he could no longer contain his joy : he went over to Lydia's parents at the parsonage, and confessed to them, with joyful tears, what the Lord had done for him.

And when he heard that it was Lydia who had given his glorified daughter the Bible, he pressed her to his heart long and warmly, thanking her for so much love.

From that time the little girl occasionally sat at the feet of the aged man ; for often, when he felt a longing for Esther, he visited Lydia, and she refreshed him again by her childlike love. Then she would take the Bible and read him words of comfort from it, or speak to him of Jesus, the good and faithful Shepherd ; then he became again comforted and joyful, for it pleased God that also in this case, out of the mouths of babes and sucklings praise should be perfected.

THE BLOTTED PICTURE.

"THIS is a spot I have selected for you, Agnes," said a gentleman to his wife, as they paused at a turn in a winding lane at a short distance from their residence. "You see the removal of that hedge has thrown open the view, and I do not think you can find a prettier point for your sketch."

"I am quite of your opinion," said Agnes, as she gazed upon the pleasant scene; "it is tastefully chosen; indeed, I did not think our cottage was so picturesque." And taking her pencil and paper, she proceeded to mark the distances, and compose a rough sketch for the intended picture of her lovely country home. In front of the cottage sloped a verdant lawn, upon which two fair children were gambolling in healthful glee, while the favourite dog, now joining in the play, completed a scene of animation and beauty.

"I suppose you will include that group of live stock in the foreground, Agnes?" said Mr. B——.

"Yes, certainly; my dear father will value the sketch the more highly for that group, if I can introduce it gracefully; but I do wish Nep would not be so very familiar in the manifestation of his attachment to the children," added she, with an anxious voice, as Nep skipped round one, and rolled another on the grass, while shouts of merry pleasure rang sweetly through the air.

"Poor Nep!" said his master, "he would not harm them, nor suffer any one else to do so in his presence."

"Ay! but he is so strong, he might injure them without intending it. The idea makes me shudder. Look now, there is that wild little Charley hugging him, until he might provoke a bite."

"Sketch them just as they are, Agnes; the boy looks well on the dog's back."

"You never seem to think mischief possible, Walter; but tell me, do you approve of introducing that hayrick in the corner of the paddock, and the cow ruminating in the pasture?"

"Yes, decidedly; they will give your father a perfect idea of our little homestead."

"Now I think of it, Walter, I wish you would order your next rick to be placed at a safer distance from the house. If it were to take fire we should certainly be burned down, and how frightful if such a thing were to occur in the night!"

"My dear Agnes, you make me laugh at your needless fears. The rick falls into your view at this distance, but it is in reality far enough from the dwelling to be burned without your knowledge, if you were within doors."

"Well, I trust you are right, but it is wise to be on the safe side, you know."

"Do you not think you had better run home, Agnes, lest you should be caught in the rain?"

"Rain! I see no sign of rain," she remarked, looking up and around in surprise; "the evening is lovely, there is not a cloud that gives sign of rain."

"Not yet, certainly," remarked her husband, "but it may come some time, you know; see, there is surely something like a very faint speck in the horizon."

"Then we will wait its further appearance ere I allow it to interfere with my work. I shall convey to my father's mind the conviction that our sky is sometimes as clear and blue as any he can find in other climes." Agnes had not perceived the smile that played on her husband's countenance as he spoke.

The sketch went on satisfactorily from day to day, and in due time a beautiful water-colour drawing displayed the taste and skill of the artist, and her thoughtful affection for the dear parent whose far-distant home it was intended to adorn.

One day the good and kind sister of her husband sat by the side of Agnes while she was engaged in a few finishing touches, and after remarking upon the correctness and beauty of the drawing, she added—

"It is a very pretty place to sketch, independently of your wish to place a representation of your dwelling in your father's view. I trust you are happy in it, dear Agnes; you do not find a country life dull or distasteful after living in a town?"

"Oh, no, far from it," answered Agnes, with animation. "I *am* happy, and feel that 'the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places.'"

"I rejoice to hear you say so, dear sister, and to see how all things seem to prosper with you."

"Ah! do not talk so, Fanny. When people begin to talk of and enumerate their blessings, they are often on

the point of some terrible change, some distressing privation. Have you not frequently heard it remarked?"

"Yes, but I hoped you were not influenced by such superstitious folly. To boast of our prosperity is the result of a very different state of mind from that which would recount in humble, grateful thanksgiving some of the bounteous blessings with which our heavenly Father's love has cheered our path of life. Does not a giver delight to see his gifts enjoyed as well as accepted? Will it not gratify you, if your father enumerates with praise and pleasure the various objects of interest in your pretty sketch?"

"But surely you would not draw any parallel between my feelings about gratifying my father, and those of the great and merciful God towards his creatures!" exclaimed Agnes, with surprise. "Are you not forgetting that his thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as ours?"

"But yet, we are susceptible of feelings which He has condescended to use as illustrations of his feelings towards us. 'Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.' 'Can a mother forget her child?'—the strongest tie on earth; yet stronger, more tender, is God's love for us. And does He not say, 'Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me?'"

"Dear Fanny," said Agnes, "you greatly mistake if you suppose that I am not conscious of and grateful for the blessings which surround me, but I am at the same time deeply impressed with my unworthiness of the least of them all, and of the uncertain tenure of all;

therefore I tremble to dwell too fondly upon the contemplation of them."

"And therefore, also, you fear to enjoy them as you might, and as I think you ought, and so God is robbed of the warm and glowing praises which would arise from the sanctified affections of a grateful heart."

"But think, Fanny, of the tendency of our deceitful hearts to idolatrous affection."

"A reason for watchfulness, self-examination, and prayer, but no reason for anxiety and apprehension, and dread of enjoying with a cheerful, happy spirit the various objects which lawfully claim our affection."

"But I desire to love God for his own sake, and to praise Him for what He is, rather than for what He bestows. It is a selfish love that is only influenced by gifts."

"My dear Agnes, where have you learned to prefer this iron chain to 'God's bands of love?' It is not merely said that 'God is love' as a truism claiming our intellectual assent, but, 'in this was manifested the love of God, that He sent his Son into the world that we might live through Him.' 'We love Him because He *first* loved' and *so* loved 'us.' An angel may instinctively love God for his perfections, and praise Him for Himself, but a fallen, sinful creature, never. An abstract theory never converted a sinner, but the great fact, love manifested, love acting, enduring, bleeding, bestowing, this is the weapon for subduing human enmity and pride, invented by Him who knows what man is made of."

"But this refers to the matter of the soul's salvation, Fanny, the gift of a Saviour, and not to our earthly portion."

“Chiefly, but not exclusively, for He who gave the greatest mercy gives all the rest: ‘How shall He not with Him freely give us all things?’ And while we trust in, repose on, and praise Him for the greatest, we may also acknowledge, enjoy, and praise Him for the least.”

“Indeed, I desire to do so. But I see so many who are far more deserving of blessings than I am, deprived of all they most enjoyed, that I must endeavour to be prepared when my turn for chastisement arrives. I read that we are ‘born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward.’ How dare I presume to suppose myself exempt?”

“You need indulge no such presumption, and yet may be happy, Agnes. But you do not seem to be reposing in simple faith upon the loving-kindness of a father,—you rather resemble the trembling captive at the chariot-wheel of a conqueror, assured of life, but a life of misery.”

“Did not He who loved us say, ‘In the world ye shall have tribulation?’”

“True, but He did not tell us to seek it, to anticipate it, to look only for the thorn, instead of gratefully enjoying the roses wreathed into the garland of life.”

“Again, is it not written, ‘Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?’”

“True, but that, I apprehend, means not that we are to anticipate evil, but, if it come, to accept it as we accept the good, assured that love bestows them both. It is the Christian’s privilege not to be afraid of evil tidings, because ‘his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.’ Sorrow and trial may come in some very different form from those which haunt your imagination, dear Agnes; but as it is sent not in wrath to punish, but in love to sanctify the character of God’s dear child, it comes

accompanied by grace to sustain under it. Oh, never let us forget that pearl of promise, 'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.' You will find no promise of help to bear imaginary sorrows, no strength to meet a self-made need, but according to the day, in time of need, you will be helped and strengthened, and a way of escape provided, that you may be able to bear it."

"I scarcely think," said Agnes, "if I confess the truth, that trial could come under any form that I have not contemplated, and endeavoured to be prepared for. Poverty, sickness, bereavement, in every form, national calamity, disgrace and ruin through misconduct of my children, every avenue through which my heart could be assailed, has at times passed in vision, as it were, before me; and I have tried to exercise my mind to resignation, knowing that I deserve all, and more than all, that could befall me."

"And forgetting that Jesus bore your griefs and carried your sorrows, that He was wounded for your transgressions and bruised for your iniquities, that the chastisement of your peace was upon Him, and that there remains not one drop of penal suffering in the cup of wrath of which He drank, and which He exhausted. Dear Agnes, if Jesus be on the throne of your affections, and you can range, as it were, your blessings round his footstool, you may fearlessly take pleasure in them all, not recklessly, not idolatrously, but gratefully, contentedly; and instead of presenting a trembling, anxious, foreboding heart, realize the spirit which feels it a good and pleasant thing to be thankful, and smile back with happy, holy love and praise in the face that smiles so tenderly on you. Will you pardon me, dearest sister, if I venture to remind you of a gentle rebuke once uttered

by those lips of love—"Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith?" Your temperament is naturally nervous and anxious, but faith could control your fears, and dissipate many anxieties. Be not careful and troubled about many things, but try to cast all your care on Him who 'careth' for you. This is the secret of peace, and the believer's soothing, tranquillizing privilege and duty. How truly wise and effectual is God's prescription for human happiness!"

Tears had gathered in the eyes of Agnes, as she bent over her drawing, listening to the gentle words of her watchful friend, but hearing her husband's step, she hastily closed her portfolio, and engaged herself in something less likely to attract observation.

"Agnes," he said, as he entered the room, "will you allow Mr. H—— to see your drawing? I have brought him into my study, thinking he might as well take the order for a frame, as he happened to be in the neighbourhood."

Agnes immediately reproduced the portfolio in which it lay, but on opening it uttered an exclamation of surprise and dismay.

"It is spoiled!—it is ruined!" she cried, "and all my labour lost."

"What has happened?" said her husband and sister, as they hastened to look upon the unfortunate work, which had hitherto been watched with so much interest.

The vexatious fact was, indeed, too plain. A thick black daub had wound its pitiless course through the choicest portions of the scene. The soft blue sky was cleft by a bold black zigzag rut, the white front of the house looked as if it had been indebted to the sweep

for the contents of his soot-bag, and, worst of all, the graceful figures of the children, and their sagacious friend Neptune, all so lately pronounced unmistakable for accuracy, were scarcely discernible amidst the confusion of the blots.

"Dear Agnes," exclaimed Mr. B——, "this is most provoking; I fear it is past remedy. How can you have done it?"

But Agnes, after the first feeling of surprise and vexation, stood quietly contemplating the ruin. She readily conjectured that her own tears had fallen unobserved upon her work, and mingled with a large streak of Indian ink upon a paper, which, in her haste, she had inadvertently placed next to the drawing.

"Fanny," said she, "this unfortunate accident is following up your recent faithful admonition. Let me read you its moral, for thus have I blotted all the fair scenes of my life by gloomy fears and anxious forebodings. I have not enjoyed as I might the comfort and beauty of my home, because I feared it might be burned or broken up. My children, instead of being sources of gratitude and pleasure, are almost exclusively anxieties; if they are happy and romping, I dread accident; if quiet, I dread illness. If my husband comes home safe and well, I terrify myself with fears of widowhood. In short, I have endured in imagination all 'the ills that flesh is heir to,' scarcely one of which has yet befallen me, and I fancied I was fortifying myself to endure them heroically."

"Instead of which you have weakened your mind, and tormented yourself in vain," remarked Fanny. "Be assured that while surrounded by blessings, you are not required to feel as you would under bereave-

ment, and that each trial ordained for you in the wise love of your heavenly Father would come accompanied by strength for its own dark hour."

"My dear Agnes," said her husband, "if the ruin of your picture has suggested thoughts so profitable, I can no longer regret it, for it has long pained me to observe your ingenuity in extracting anxiety from every circumstance around you, and the clouds with which you would darken our sunny sky. Indeed, I too had begun 'o fear lest you might provoke a trial from the hand of God, in order to prove to you that not only 'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,' but also that sufficient unto the trial is the power of endurance thereof."

"Lord, increase my faith!" murmured Agnes.

"'Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice,'" whispered Fanny. "The Christian who truly rejoices in Him will not be found careful and troubled about many things."

The picture in process of time was painted again; no blot disfigured its beauty, and the meditations of the artist were less clouded by apprehensions and forebodings.

Agnes has antitypes in domestic life.

Faith too often seems to retain its proportions as "the grain of mustard seed," instead of taking root downward in calm and steady hold upon the eternal rock, and bearing fruit upward in bright and vigorous and cheerful activity, sanctifying the affections, regulating the views, and making melody in the hearts of God's dear children. If happiness ever graces this fallen world, only in the bosom of believers in Jesus can it be found

BANTRY AND GLENGARIFF.

"THE havens of Ireland are so many in number, and for the most part so fair and large, that, in this particular, hardly any land in the world may be compared with this."* There are no less than fourteen, so spacious, deep, tranquil, and well sheltered, as to afford secure anchorage for the largest men-of-war; while seventy others are well adapted for ordinary commercial vessels. The renowned Bantry Bay and Queenstown harbour, in the county of Cork, are by far the largest. The former is twenty-one miles in length, and its breadth is estimated at five or six miles. As a roadstead it stands almost unrivalled, and the whole British navy might safely ride at anchor within it. "The prospect," says Kohl, "from the mountains over these waters is truly charming, and just as much so the road running round the bay, into which several little rivers pour their waters, while several inlets of the sea run far into the land. We crossed them by bridges, overgrown by rich draperies of ivy, and several small islands were connected with the mainland in a similar way."

There are two harbours at the head of the bay: on the south side, Bantry harbour, opposite the town of Bantry; and northwards, Glengariff harbour. Near

* Gerard Boate.



the mouth, on the north shore, is Bear Haven, formed by Bear Island,* with an entrance on either side. From its facility of access and nearness to the sea, this harbour is well fitted for the rendezvous of a fleet, affording good and safe anchorage. It was near the entrance to Bantry Bay, in 1689, that an engagement took place between the French fleet, which brought James II. to Ireland, and the British fleet, under the command of Admiral Herbert. In Bantry Bay, at the close of the last century, the French attempted a landing; here, likewise, it is supposed by some that the Spanish colonists landed above a thousand years ago; and here too, in all probability, the Phœnicians first set foot in Ireland at some unknown period.†

Bantry is a neat, pretty town, and stands on an elegantly-formed bay, curving from the great one. "There is in the very nature of the sea something essentially fresh, healthy, and animating," which, probably, exerts a beneficial influence on those who dwell on the shores of Ireland; for the people, generally speaking, are not so ragged, idle, dirty, or poor, on its coasts, as are those who dwell in the interior towns. "At the beginning of the present century, Bantry boasted a prosperous pilchard fishery, large quantities of which were annually exported. But from one of two causes, this branch of industry has declined: either the fish have diminished in quantity, or have taken another direction. An extensive traffic, however, is carried on here, at Glengariff, and every point along

* Lord Berehaven, son of Earl Bantry, derives his title from this island.

† Kohl's "Ireland, Scotland, and England."

the shore of the bay, in the landing and carting of sea-sand for manure. It is brought in boats from the bay, and the number of vessels employed has so increased, that a quay has been erected exclusively for them. The sand consists principally of broken shells and chalk, and its use contributes materially to the improvement of the agriculture of the country."

Adjoining the town is the beautiful seat of Earl Bantry; its situation is "extremely fine, the ground rising into a considerable elevation, which gives it a complete command of the bay." The population of Bantry in 1841 was 4,082, but in ten years was reduced to 2,935.

Leaving Bantry, we direct our course to the mountainous district of Glengariff, where the scenery is the most striking in the United Kingdom. "The road thither," says Dr. Forbes,* "leads round all the little arms and windings of the bay, which is scarcely ever out of sight. On reaching the heights that overlook the bay and valley of Glengariff, and in descending the slope of the circular sweep which these take around the shore, the character of the landscape entirely changes, and you are at once ushered into the midst of scenes which combine the most exquisite beauty with not a little of grandeur and picturesqueness. . . . The constituent parts of this landscape are, in the first place, the bay itself, here circumscribed by its mountain barriers into a perfect lake, stretching out in one direction almost to the horizon, where it is bounded by the serrated ridge of blue mountains that divide it from

* "Memorandums made in Ireland in the Autumn of 1852." By John Forbes, M.D. F.R.S.

Dunmanus bay, and, less remotely, on the right, by the equally lofty range that overlooks Kenmare river; secondly, the numerous islands that break its glittering expanse—one with its martello tower, another with its thicket of trees, another with its summit of bare rock; thirdly, the circle of hills and mountains that surround all the inner or upper portion of the bay, the nearer hills covered to the top with wood, the higher and more remote mountains black in their coverings of heath, and in the walls of bare rock that cut it asunder, some of them sharpened into peaks, some massy and bluff, the whole suggesting the idea of guardianship to the valley and to the water; lastly, the inner and lower circle of sloping terraces and rugged cliffs, immediately bordering the shore at its innermost round, all covered with trees and bushes, rising bank above bank, and so uniting as it were, by a broad green belt, the gentle waters with their majestic ramparts. I shall not attempt to combine these elements into a picture by a description which must prove a failure, but I think I am not in any degree exaggerating the truth, when I say that the scene which presented itself to me between five and six o'clock the following morning from my bedroom window seemed hardly surpassable as a specimen of the beautiful; and, certainly, according to my judgment at the time, had never been exceeded by anything in my past experience."

THE TOPAZ BRACELET.

"WHAT a fine summer morning!" said Mary Wilmot, as she opened her cottage window, and looked out at the roses and honeysuckles which grew around it, all covered with dew that glittered in the sunshine. "How bright and cheerful everything looks!"

Her own countenance was as bright and cheerful as any of them, while she arranged an early breakfast for her brother before he went to his work.

"Yes," he replied, "all does look well such a morning as this; still, as the Psalmist says, 'Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until evening,'* except the favoured few who are rich and great in this world."

"Ah! James, I doubt that such *are* the favoured few," said Mary. "But though we do work, have we not reason to be happy? Our dear mother is recovering fast; and, under the goodness of God, it is owing to the care you have taken to provide her with nourishing things that were necessary for her. Surely that must make you happy."

"Thank God our dear mother is recovering, Mary, and we must try and continue to get her what she requires—though I hardly know how we can. Does it not seem strange, Mary," he continued after a pause, "that

old Mrs. N——, up at the villa yonder, who never did any good in her life, should have such riches and comforts, and our mother's be—”

“Hush! James,” interrupted his sister, playfully putting her hand over his lips. “You are speaking unadvisedly. Our dear mother often says she has more blessings than she deserves, particularly when she thanks God for giving her so good a son.”

“Not half so good as I ought to be, after all she did for me, Mary. Still, I hope I may repay her yet. Do not tell her, for fear of a disappointment; but our foreman is going to leave the gardens where I work, and I have some idea that the head gardener may appoint me in his place, which would be an increase of wages. Oh! I may get on yet, and have mother and you as comfortable as you ought to be, and—”

“Stop, stop again, James; Solomon says, ‘The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit,’* and indeed, brother dear, you have too proud a spirit and too hot a temper.”

“I know I have Mary, and badly they become me.”

“They do, James; they badly become any poor sinful creature who looks for salvation to the free mercy of God through the sacrifice of his Son. But the Holy Spirit will help you to subdue them if you ask his help, for ‘it is promised to all who ask. Oh, James, everything good is promised in this blessed book; enough to make us all as happy as we can be. So now read a chapter, and be off to your work;” and she placed a Bible before him.

As James walked to the gardens where he was

* Eccles. vii. 3.

employed, he thought over his sister's accusation, that he had by nature a proud spirit and a bold temper. He remembered some instances in which they had got him into scrapes, and resolved to overcome them; but there is reason to fear he forgot Mary's advice to seek for grace to help in time of need.

This was one of the days on which the gardens, which were beautiful, were open for visitors; and while James was busy in a conservatory filled with rare exotics, now in full bloom, two ladies entered, and appeared absorbed in admiration of their beauty. "How lovely!" "Look at this exquisite crimson flower!" and similar expressions were heard, till one of the ladies stopped before a geranium, and said to the other, "See! this is quite new. Mrs. N—— has nothing like it. I would give the whole world for a cutting."

"That would be a large price for the pleasure of out-doing Mrs. N——," replied her companion, smiling.

"Oh! she is such a churl, and thinks so much of her plants, that it would be delightful to have one which she could not get—she would so envy me."

"Envy is a hateful feeling," said her friend, who was a mild, pleasing-looking young lady. "Surely, dear Maria, you cannot seriously wish to excite it in the mind of a fellow-creature, when you know that the apostle says, 'Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.'"^{*} But the other did not heed her.

"Is this a new geranium?" she inquired, addressing James.

"Quite new, ma'am, and very rare," he replied.

^{*} James iii. 16.

"I thought so. The rich velvet of the petals is beyond anything I ever beheld. Would you give me one small cutting?" she asked, in a low voice.

"No, ma'am, it is not mine to give; and we do not sell them," he added, as she took out a purse.

"See," said she, holding up some silver pieces, "I would give those for a very little bit. I live several miles distant, and my having it would not interfere with any one here."

"Oh! Maria, stop. Would you bribe this young man to do wrong?" cried her companion.

Maria looked very angry, and spoke as if rebuking the other lady sharply for her interference, but it was in a low voice, and James only heard the words, "Nonsense, Georgiana! Ridiculous scruples—the poor know nothing of them."

When James saw the silver in the lady's hand—and there was a good deal of it—his first thought was that it would be enough to provide wine, broth, and everything that his mother required. But this thought was quickly banished from his mind, by remembering that he could not get it without doing what was wrong, which he resolved not to do. So far he was quite right; and had he firmly, but mildly and respectfully, declined her proposal, he would have been, as servants are commanded, "showing all good fidelity, and adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour." * But, unhappily, the words, "Scruples—the poor know nothing of them," which he had overheard, excited in his bosom that proud spirit and hot temper against which his sister had so lately been warning him. "The poor!" thought he:

* Titus ii. 10.

"how the poor are despised! But she shall see that I am more honest than herself;" and he replied, "Keep your money, ma'am, for some better purpose than tempting others to sin. Poor as I may be, I would scruple to touch what was not my own;" saying which, he took the coveted plant, and placed it on a high shelf, as it were out of her way.

The lady became highly incensed. "Georgiana, did you ever hear such insolence? Is he afraid I will steal the cutting?"

"Dear Maria," said her friend, "the young man may have spoken hastily, and not with the respect due to your rank; but, forgive me for saying so, you too were very wrong, led away probably by your great wish to possess the flower."

"I did speak hastily, ma'am," said James, now brought to a consciousness of his fault by the last speaker's gentle manner, "and I ask your pardon."

"Ay, you are afraid I may complain of you to your master, and I have a mind to do so," she replied, and walked away highly excited, as much at losing the prospect of having a finer geranium than Mrs. N—— possessed as at anything else.

About an hour after the ladies had left the gardens, James again went to arrange something in the conservatory, and perceived a very sparkling object on the ground near where the discussion about the geranium had taken place. He took it up, and saw that it was a bracelet which he had noticed on the arm of the lady whom her friend called Maria. It was a handsome one, the clasp being set with topazes. James Wilmot had by his good mother's care, from a child, known the

Holy Scriptures, and been taught to "abhor that which was evil," so that a thought of appropriating to his own use the gold and gems he had found never so much as entered his mind. He stood with the trinket in his hand, considering how it would be possible to discover the owner's address, for the purpose of restoring it to her, when a strange gentleman entered the greenhouse. Hoping he might belong to the same party, he said to him, "I beg your pardon, sir, but maybe you could tell me the names of two ladies who were here about an hour ago, and have, I believe, left the grounds?"

"Probably I can," replied the gentleman. "As I drew near the entrance to this demesne, I saw a carriage drive off with which I am well acquainted. Was one of the ladies a tall, gay-looking person?"

"Yes, sir; and the other a mild-looking young lady."

"Did they call each other Maria and Georgiana?"

"Just so, sir; I see you know them."

He then produced the bracelet, mentioning his wish to have it safely returned. "It belongs," said he, "to the tall lady; I saw her clasping and unclasping it, not knowing what she did, for she was in a terrible passion, and I suppose it was then she dropped it."

The stranger asked the cause of her passion, which James told just as it occurred.

"She deserves to lose her topaz bracelet," said the gentleman, laughing; "but as you are so anxious to restore it, I will, if you intrust it to me, deliver it to her to-morrow or the next day."

James agreed, and gave it to him, and he continued in a graver tone, "Your conduct in this matter, young

man, does you great credit. It not only proves you honest, but of a forgiving disposition; for, I grieve to say, the lady acted very badly towards you."

"Oh, sir, do not praise me!" said James. "How could I call myself a Christian, and do otherwise? Does not the Word of God command us to 'do that which is honest?'* And does not it say to us, 'Forbearing one another and forgiving one another—even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye?'"†

"Ha! I see you have read your Bible to a good purpose," observed the gentleman, as if he felt an increasing interest in the young gardener. "Will you answer me one question candidly? The silver the lady offered was tempting to a lad like you; did you feel any inclination to take it, and to give a little bit of the geranium?"

James coloured very much, and replied, "I did, sir. My mother has been ill, and requires much nourishing food, and—but God enabled me to resist the temptation, sir; to Him be the praise."

"And may He forgive her who tempted you! she did very wrong. Young man, your conduct is such as teaches one to honour the religion you profess. I must leave you now," looking at his watch; "the bracelet shall be delivered, and oblige me by accepting this for your mother." He put a sovereign into James's hand, and went off.

But the adventures of the day were not over. About two hours after this, young Wilmot was summoned by the head gardener, and to his surprise saw the two ladies with him.

* 2 Cor. xiii. 7.

† Col. iii. 13.

"James," said the gardener sternly, "this lady lost a bracelet in the conservatory this morning, and has driven back to claim it. Thomas, here," pointing to one of the garden-boys, "says he saw you pick up something shiny; that, after talking for a while to a strange man, you gave it to him, and he gave you money for it. Is it all so?"

Surprise, and a sudden consciousness that his conduct was liable to misinterpretation, put poor James into a state of such confusion as at once confirmed the suspicions against him.

"Then it *is* so!" said the gardener. "Wilmot, you are the last I should have supposed guilty of such a thing."

"It is so, sir. It is as Thomas says; and still I am not guilty," he cried, and told the particulars of his interview with the gentleman.

"Rather an unlikely story," said the owner of the bracelet; and even those who were most anxious to prove James innocent could not help acknowledging that it was so. The mild-looking young lady, named Georgiana, suggested that nothing should be decided until the two days within which, as James asserted, the gentleman had promised to restore the trinket, had passed; to which the gardener agreed, adding that if it were not then recovered, he must dismiss Wilmot from his employment.

"I am satisfied, sir," said the latter; "for certainly he was no impostor."

With an anxious heart poor James returned home that evening, and, when his mother had retired, told his sister all that had occurred. She was, at first, much

shocked; but then encouraged her brother to hope all would be explained in the given time; adding, "Let us put our trust in God, and leave the matter to Him. You have done nothing wrong, dear brother."

"I have, Mary. If it were not for that proud spirit that you warned me about this morning, I should not have spoken so as to put the lady in a passion, which occasioned the loss of the bracelet, and made her so bitter that she helped to set the gardener against me."

Two days—three—a whole week passed; and then came a letter to inform the gardener that there had been no account of the bracelet. Poor James was dismissed. Who could describe what he felt as the weeping Mary disclosed the whole story to their mother? It is written, "The Lord will give strength unto his people;" and on this occasion the promise was strikingly fulfilled. This poor weak woman bore the trial with so much submission to God's will, and such faith in his goodness, as greatly to comfort and strengthen her children.

"Take this sovereign which the good gentleman gave me, for such I do believe he is," said James, "and take care of our mother, Mary. I have what wages were due to me, and will go seek for employment, even as a common labourer, if I can do no better. When I get it, you shall hear from me."

The next morning, James Wilmot, amidst prayers and tears, left his home. It is not our intention to detail the various hopes and disappointments he experienced during a weary search of some weeks for work. At length his small stock of money was exhausted, and, much disheartened; he was obliged to turn towards

home again. He had come within fifteen miles of it, when he heard of a gentleman who wanted a gardener. "There is little hope that he, or any one else, will take one like me without a character," thought James; but just then he remembered that heart-cheering verse, Phil. iv. 6, and turned his steps towards the residence of the person to whom he had been directed. "Where is your master?" asked James of a servant whom he met in the avenue. "Just there, in the shrubbery-walk," was the reply. With an anxious heart, the poor young man turned into the walk. A gentleman, with a lady leaning on his arm, both in deep mourning, came near him. He looked, started, and looked again. It was the very person to whom he had given the bracelet, and his companion was Georgiana. They both recognised him at once, and to the lady's question of "Where did you know this young man?" the gentleman, who was her brother, gave the following explanation:—"I had," said he, "been spending a few days with a friend in the neighbourhood of the gardens, and going to visit them, caught a glimpse of our own carriage driving from the entrance-gate. I concluded that my sister had brought our cousin Maria, who is a great florist, to see them. This young man's account proved I was right, and I took the bracelet, intending to return home the next day, and restore it to the owner. On going from the garden to my friend's house, I found a letter, announcing that our dear father was dangerously ill on the Continent. Setting off instantly to go to him, you will not wonder that I forgot the bracelet. I attended him closely till he died, and then came home, where I have been but a few days, still too hurried to think

of it till the sight of this poor young man brought it to my mind. It now remains for me to make restitution for all my omissions."

The day after this occurrence, the widow Wilmot and her daughter were sitting at their cottage door, thinking and talking of their beloved James, and in all their sorrow exemplifying St. Paul's description of the afflicted Christian—"perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." They heard the sound of wheels; a carriage drove up and stopped opposite to their house. There was a person seated on the box with the coachman; he sprang down and ran towards them. Yes! it was he—James! A lady and gentleman alighted and joined them. They were come to clear James's character to every one—not a blemish would remain on it. More than that, they had engaged him to be their gardener. A nice cottage was being prepared for his mother and sister, to which they would soon be removed; and it would be the gentleman's endeavour, in every way that he could, to make amends for what they had suffered through his carelessness. "The praise be to Him," said Mrs. Wilmot, "who from the first day of my widowhood enabled me to trust in his own gracious words, 'Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.'"*

* Jer. xlix. 11.

THE LEAFLETS' VOYAGE.

THE bright hot sun of a summer morning dictated the path for the ramble of a little party, on an excursion of pleasure, and all around them being new to their sight, exclamations of surprise and delight broke forth at almost every step. Our choice on this occasion was more than usually happy: and following the narrow wooded path by the side of the meandering Wharfe, we suddenly arrived at a lovely secluded retreat close upon the water's edge, where the bended trunk of a yet living tree furnished opportunity to rest and admire at leisure.

“This is pretty!—this is delightful!” exclaimed the children; and so it was. The river, at this bend in its course, seemed inclosed by precipitous rocks, clothed with moss and lichen, and crowned with wavy foliage which almost met overhead. No sound was there but the soft murmur of many waters; for the stream, which came quiet, and still, and deep, for a short distance above, began a gentle descent at the point where we sat, and some large stones interrupting its progress caused that musical ripple with which it resented opposition, and bounded on as if resolute to overcome every impediment, until it reached a sudden fall, and rushed tossing and foaming into a deep rocky basin some yards below.

For some time we sat in silent admiration, but a new object presently arrested the attention of my young companions. Over the still water hung a thick shade of willow, and ash, and other trees; and as the soft breeze occasionally swept through their graceful branches, here and there a leaf was detached, and lighted upon the calm bright surface beneath. There they floated for a while, and then, yielding to the current, came slowly down towards our resting-place. First came a fine leaf of bright yellow-brown, like a tiny boat on a fairy voyage, and up rose hands and voices in excitement and interest.

"Oh, mamma, look—look at that pretty yellow boat! how slowly it came along just now; but see, it is going quicker, it whirls about, and cannot get steady again! Oh, poor little boat! now it has reached the foaming water—it will, it must go over the fall—see, see, it cannot help itself, it is going, going—ah, it is gone, gone, gone! Let us run to the next part, where the water is quiet again, and try if we can see it once more, after it has been nearly drowned." And away they rushed to look after the unwary leaf, but soon returned, proclaiming their assurance that it must be lost for ever.

Then came other leaves, some bright green, some large, some small, exciting similar interest, as they passed on to a similar fate. While the children thus amused themselves, my thoughts were busy in real things, brought vividly to mind by the perilous voyage of the leafy boat.

My once-admired friend Emmeline H—— had grown up in happiness and beauty, as it were on the parent tree, amidst the sacred scenes of a Christian home, and

possessing what may be called only educational faith, supposed herself strong in the vital reality, and able to battle with evil communications without risk of corruption. She launched unadvisedly upon the world's wide current, and her beauty and talent were to commend the principles in which she had been trained, and which she resolved to maintain against all opposers. But gradually as the beauty and wit gathered their meed of admiration, the principles lost their brightness and their keenness, and the breath of flattery urged her unconsciously into the doubtful enjoyments of gayer scenes. Then the decline began; on, on she went into the dizzy ways and fashions of a world "that lieth in the wicked one;" her head swam, her heart yielded, and down she plunged, like the tossed leaf over the foaming fall, into the very vortex of dissipation and ruin. In vain I have sought her in tranquil ways; she is not to be found at present; but when health and beauty fail, and talent is wearied, because no longer flattered, and the disappointed heart is sick and faint, then, perhaps, I may find the wreck on some cast-away shore, forgotten and forsaken of all, save Christian love.

Again, as I heard the exclamations of the young gazers after floating leaves, the remembrance of Henry S—— came across my mind. He was the darling son of professing Protestants, and fondly they decked their hopes of his future course with all the honours of the Church of his fathers. He determined, however, to be a missionary; he would launch the life-boat among the perishing heathen, and proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to the ends of the earth. So he began his career strong in his own strength and the power of his own might, without doubting that he was safe in

"the kingdom" which he had *not* sought "first" for himself; and he leaned upon a broken reed. Soon he drifted away from the deep truths of revelation, into shallows where forms and ceremonies stirred up a busy sound of zeal and earnestness in heavenly things; and here the descent into vain superstitions and dangerous deceits began, until he rapidly approached the fatal gulf, where the dark bosom of apostate Rome was ready to receive him, and where he became a fanatical persecuting priest, deeming the promise of his earlier life fulfilled to worse than heathen, when he can seduce a victim from the ranks of Protestantism, into the toils of his popish net. Had he been strong *in the Lord*, looking unto Jesus, this fatal shipwreck never could have taken place. But Satan keeps watch for the youthful launch upon the sea of life, and if no Saviour already holds the helm, he supplies a pilot's place, and steers for the currents most likely to attract. He has shallows of superstition for the sentimental, deep weedy hollows for the adventurous and sceptical, sweet rippling flatteries for the self-sufficient, and a thousand beguilements for the unstable and the careless. For the means he cares not, so that he can trim the bark for the fatal gulf below. But—

"Look, look, mamma!" again cried all the young party at once; "see, there is a leaf that seems as if it would turn back again! Oh, I do hope it will. Yes! look, look, it *will* not go over the fall! Then the leaves are not *obliged* to go over the fall, mamma? Ah, you independent little leaf, what are you going to do with yourself?" Thus they ran on, while I, almost equally interested, watched the tiny craft to which they pointed. And true it was that it came softly and lightly along

the still water for a little time, then turned upon a gentle eddy near the first appearance of the slope, and drifted at an angle some distance across the river back again, then lingered, and trembled, and finally shot lightly into a little bay formed by a projection of the overhanging rock.

"Well done, little boat!" cried the children, clapping their hands: "stay there, and you are safe!" I perceived what they did not, that a change in the breeze, which occasionally played along the water, had caught the leaf on its downward course, and being stronger than the early current which bore it, had wafted it away from the threatening danger, and carried it safe into port.

What Christian could observe this change without a remembrance of his own little story of life?—how he was once drifting along towards danger and death, when an unseen hand took the helm of the unwary heart, and, like the wind that bloweth where it listeth, the Eternal Spirit breathed upon the sail, and turned the voyager into the appointed way towards the haven of peace, the shelter from the storm, to receive free pardon of sin at the feet of Jesus Christ, and to ride safely at anchor by the Rock of salvation. True, the leaves were not *obliged* to go over the fall; souls are not *obliged* to submit to the enemy's pilotage; and though an earnest cry for help brings the mighty clasp of the Everlasting Arm even at the brink of the abyss, yet happier those who seek "the Guide of their youth" in time, who keep off the eddies that begin a decline, and, hiding in the bosom of a loving and faithful Saviour, are happy now and safe for ever.

A POET'S NOBLEST THEME.

THE works of man may yield delight,
And justly merit praise ;
But though awhile they charm the sight,
That charm in time decays.
The sculptor's, painter's, poet's skill,—
The art of mind's creative will,
In various modes may teem :
But none of these, however rare
Or exquisite, can, truth, declare
A poet's noblest theme.

The sun, uprising, may display
His glory to the eye,
And hold in majesty his way
Across the vaulted sky ;
Then sink resplendent in the west,
Where parting clouds his rays invest
With beauty's softest beam :
Yet not unto the sun belong
The charms which consecrate in song
A poet's noblest theme.

The moon, with yet more touching grace,
The silent night may cheer,
And shed o'er many a lonely place
A charm to feeling dear ;

The countless stars which grace her reign,
A voiceless, but a lovely train,
 With brilliant light may gleam :
But she nor they, though fair to see,
And formed for love, can ever be
 A poet's noblest theme.

The winds, whose music to the ear
 With that of art may vie,
Now loud, awakening awe and fear,
 Then soft as pity's sigh ;—
The mighty ocean's ample breast,
Calm or convulsed, in wrath or rest,
 A glorious sight may seem :
But neither winds nor boundless sea,
Though beautiful or grand, can be
 A poet's noblest theme.

The earth, our own dear native earth !
 Has charms all hearts may own ;
They cling around us from our birth,—
 More loved as longer known ;
Hers are the lovely vales, the wild
And pathless forest, mountains piled
 On high, and many a stream
Whose beauteous banks the heart may love ;
Yet none of these can, truth, approve
 A poet's noblest theme.

The virtues, which our fallen state
 With foolish pride would claim,
May, in themselves, be good and great,—
 To us an empty name.

Truth, justice, mercy, patience, love,
May seem with man on earth to rove,

And yet may *only seem* :

To none of these, *as man's*, dare I

The title of my verse apply—

“A poet's noblest theme.”

To GOD alone, whose power Divine

Created all that live ;

To GOD alone can truth assign

This proud prerogative :—

But how shall man attempt HIS praise,

Or dare to sing in mortal lays

OMNIPOTENCE SUPREME !

When seraph-choirs, in heaven above,

Proclaim his glory and his love,

Their noblest, sweetest theme ?

Thanks be to God ! his grace has shown

How sinful man on earth

May join the songs which round his throne

Give endless praises birth :

He gave HIS SON for man to die !

He sent HIS SPIRIT from on high !

To consummate the scheme :

Oh ! be that consummation bless'd !

And let REDEMPTION be confess'd

A poet's noblest theme.

B. BARTON

